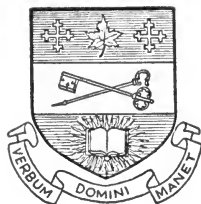


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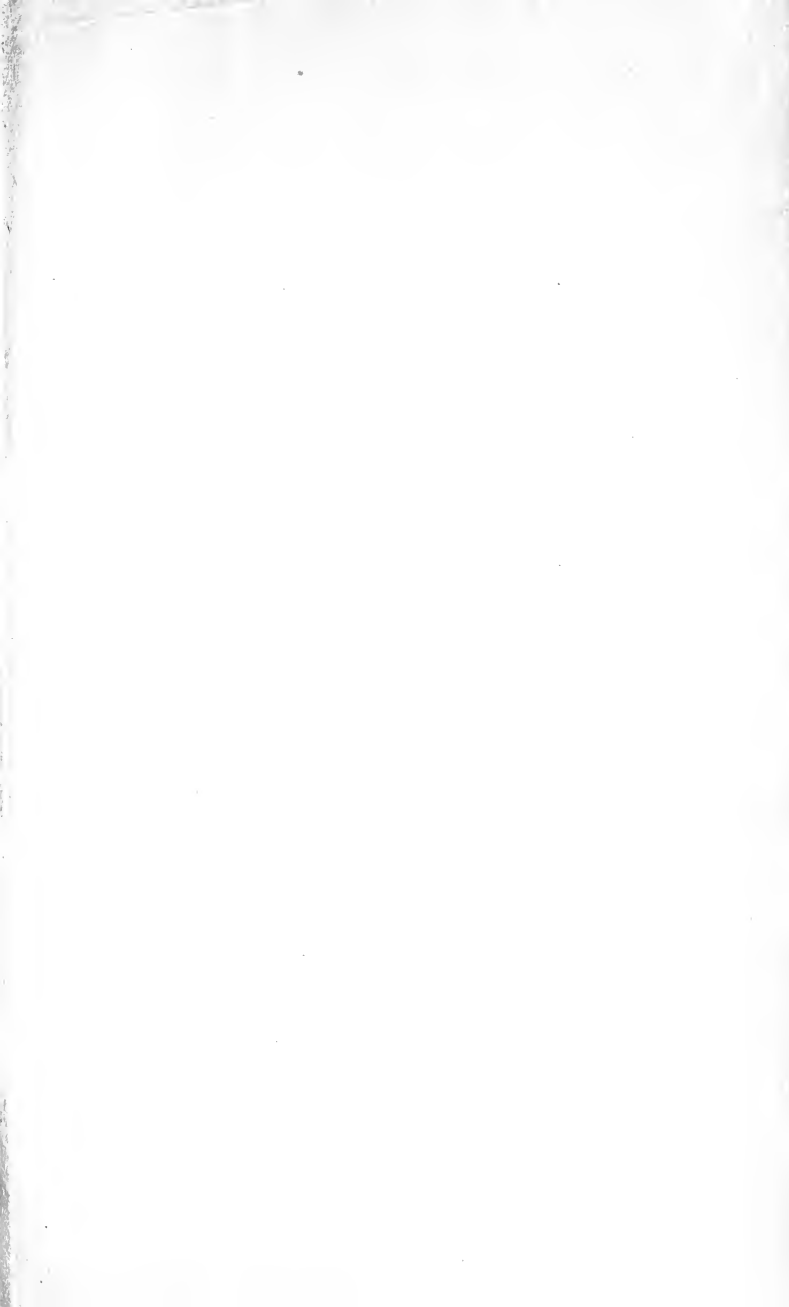
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THE
COLLECTS OF THE DAY

Advent to Whitsunday

THE
Collects of the Day

AN EXPOSITION

*CRITICAL AND DEVOTIONAL OF THE COLLECTS
APPOINTED AT THE COMMUNION*

With Preliminary Essays on their Structure, Sources, and General Character,
and Appendices containing Expositions of the Discarded Collects of
the First Prayer Book of 1549, and of the Collects of
Morning and Evening Prayer

BY

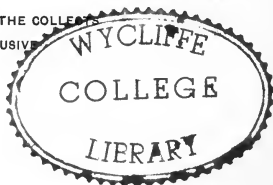
EDWARD MEYRICK GOULBURN, D.D.

DEAN OF NORWICH.

IN TWO VOLS.

VOL. I.

CONTAINING THE PRELIMINARY ESSAYS, AND THE COLLECTS
FROM ADVENT TO WHITSUNDAY INCLUSIVE



RIVINGTONS
WATERLOO PLACE, LONDON 5066
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TO

William, Lord Bishop of Chester

A VERY OLD AND TRUE FRIEND

AND A RIPE SCHOLAR IN ALL LORE CONNECTED WITH

The Book of Common Prayer,

THESE PAGES ARE INSCRIBED

WITH MUCH AFFECTION AND ESTEEM

AND IN MEMORY

OF MANY KINDNESSES RECEIVED FROM HIM

IN HAPPY DAYS LONG PAST.

PREFACE.

SINCE Sir William Palmer led the way in his "*Origines Liturgicæ*," several works, and among them "*The Prayer Book Interleaved*," a most valuable compendium of Liturgical information, have exhibited the original Latin of those of our Collects which are derived from ancient sources. But I am not aware that any one has entered upon a criticism of the translations which our Reformers have given us of the old Latin Prayers, or has noted where each prayer has suffered, and where it has gained, in the process of translation; what a loss of point, or breaking up of the unity of the sentiment, there has been in some instances, and what masterly and happy touches, in the way of developement and expansion, the idea has received in others. This criticism has much engaged and interested me for several years; and in that portion of this work which deals with the translated Collects of the Communion Office, I have entered freely into a comparison between the original and the translation, in the hope that such a comparison might prove, both indirectly and directly, useful to my readers; indirectly, as keeping before their minds the

venerable antiquity of a large number of the prayers, in which they habitually address the God of their fathers (a practical recognition of the fact that the God of their fathers is their God also); and directly, as exhibiting and bringing into full light many a fine shade of edifying significance which inheres in the original, but which no translation can convey. I wrote for the pulpit in the first instance (for these Chapters have, for upwards of four or five years past, formed the Saturday afternoon Lectures at Norwich Cathedral), and I seized therefore every opportunity which the language furnished, of inculcating good and edifying sentiments. Indeed, I should hardly have done otherwise; had I been writing merely for the press; for in vain will any one seek to understand and explain the prayers of the old masters of devotion, except in a devotional frame of mind.

More and more the thought has grown upon me, as I have prosecuted this work, that the pastors of Christ's flock should systematically recognise it, much more than they do, as a part of their function to teach the people to pray. In the Church of England we have the most complete text-book for such instruction which the wisdom and devotion of man can compile,—a text-book comprising such a wealth of materials in a very brief compass as is probably unrivalled among uninspired works. But it has been too much the fashion to suppose that, while, indeed, the Bible is a fit subject for explanation and illustration,

the Liturgy needs none,—that all we have to do as regards the Prayer Book is to use it in our devotional exercises, and to make it the vehicle of our devotional sentiments, as if any one could do this intelligently without some preliminary study of, and insight into, its meaning. Indeed, in this respect the prayers of the Church have only come in for a fuller share of that misuse, or unintelligent use, which is made (though in a less degree, in proportion to its greater sanctity and authority) of the Lord's Prayer itself. To how few of the thousands of persons who are taught and enjoined to recite the Lord's Prayer, is a single petition of it ever unfolded or explained! How many repeat it glibly morning and night, without ever having the surface of their minds stirred or interested by its meaning! Expositions, both ancient and modern, have been written upon it, so numerous and so profound, as in themselves to constitute a theological literature; but, while these treatises lie on our shelves, and are consulted by the learned, how comparatively rare is the attempt even to inoculate the minds of the masses with the most cursory understanding of the formulary. Doubtless, clergymen often make it the subject of a series of sermons; but is any methodical attempt made to imbue the minds of congregations with its meaning, as if the intelligent use of it were a matter of prime importance? This being the case with the Divine Prayer itself (than which what can be sweeter, what more elevating, what more consolatory, what more

absolutely exhaustless in its treasures of instruction and edification?), it is no wonder that the prayers of the Church, which are but feeble transcripts and stammering reproductions of the Divine model, should have but little study accorded to them, even when they are familiar to the ear as household words, and lodged in the memory by frequent and periodical recital. I trust, then, that this work may be accepted as a humble contribution on my part to the great ministerial duty of teaching Christ's people to pray, and that it may be instrumental, under God's blessing, in opening the eyes of some to a wonderful depth and beauty and instructiveness in those old devotional forms, which they have been acquainted with from their earliest childhood, but which hitherto have stirred in them little thought, and awakened no emotion.

I trust that the reader will excuse the recurrence every now and then of the same thought in the Expositions, where the phraseology of two or more Collects happens to be the same (as, for instance, where the Latin "propitius" or "placatus" is rendered, and not quite adequately rendered, "merciful," and in one and all cases of its occurrence it becomes desirable to warn the reader that the original conveys the notion of propitiation, or *mercy shown through atonement*). It was not possible to avoid this; and, as the Chapters are intended for study *separately* during the week, or on the day for which the Collect is appointed, it is hoped that no disadvantage will accrue from it.

I must express my regret for an erroneous statement, discovered to be erroneous after the sheet containing it was struck off, to the effect that "only ten Sealed Books are known to exist at present, viz. those belonging to the Tower, the four Courts of Law, and the Cathedrals of St. Paul's, Christ Church (Oxford), Ely, Chichester, and Norwich" (see vol. i. p. 177, *note* 1). This is a mistake. Salisbury Cathedral has certainly a Sealed Book; and the Rev. J. H. Blunt, who made the laudable endeavour (unhappily frustrated) to arrive at an exact text of the Prayer Book, by making a tour of the Cathedral Libraries, and looking up all the Sealed Books in existence, thinks that he has seen the volume at Lichfield, Worcester, York, and elsewhere. "My impression is" (he writes to me under date October 4, 1879) "that most, if not all, of the Sealed Books have been preserved, but that the Letters-Patent have usually been taken away for the sake of the Great Seal. . . . The task of enquiry would involve great labour; but, if that cannot be undertaken, I think it would be safer to conclude that most of the copies are preserved than otherwise."

I take this opportunity of expressing my cordial thanks to Mr. Blunt for his communications with me on this and other subjects connected with the Prayer Book; as also to the Rev. W. E. Buckley, Rector of Middleton Cheney, who has given me such assistance in some of the notes as I could not have obtained elsewhere; and to Miss Frederica

Franks, who has most kindly undertaken the labour of a very copious and exhaustive index. As for Canon Bright's invaluable help, I cannot say how promptly and fully it has been accorded whenever I have sought for it.

E. M. G.

14 LANSDOWNE PLACE, BRIGHTON,
April 28, 1880.

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BOOK I.

INTRODUCTORY.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE EXCELLENCES OF THE COLLECTS.

Golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.

REV. v. 8.

THE Collects of the English Prayer Book have received various eulogies from authors of note. Bishop Sanderson called them "the most passionate, proper, and most elegant expressions"¹ (of devotional feeling) "that any language ever afforded; and that there was in them such piety, and so interwoven with instructions, that they taught us to know the power, the wisdom, the majesty, and mercy of God, and much of our duty both to Him and our neighbour." Alexander Knox said of them that "for twelve hundred years they had been as the manna in the wilderness to devout spirits, and are, next to Scripture itself, the clearest standard whereby genuine piety may be discerned; the surest guidance by which its pro-

¹ Walton's "Lives," p. 412. [London, 1825.] It was in a conversation with Walton "near to Little Britain," in "a cleanly house," where the two friends had been driven to take shelter by the rain, that Sanderson said the above words.

gress may be directed; the highest mark to which its wishes would aspire.”¹ Lord Macaulay, hitting in few words their chief characteristics, commends them for “their unity of sentiment and severity of style.”² Archdeacon Freeman speaks of them as “prayers of matchless profundity, which comprehend all the spiritual needs of man.”³ But, at the outset of our exposition of them, it will be interesting and edifying to consider the language in which Holy Scripture itself describes “the prayers of saints,” and to note how exactly the Collects in their main features correspond with this description. This, then, is the symbol under which, in the sublime opening vision of the Revelation, “the prayers of saints” are set forth—“golden vials full of odours.” The word “odours” is translated “incense” in a later passage of this book,

¹ “Remains of Alexander Knox, Esq.,” vol. ii. p. 357. [London, 1836.]

² Essay on Milton, “Essays,” pp. 28, 60. [London, 1854.] “The unity of sentiment and severity of style which characterise these little pieces” (Milton’s “Sonnets”) “remind us of the Greek Anthology, or perhaps still more of the Collects of the English Liturgy. The noble poem on the Massacres of Piedmont is strictly a collect in verse.” We may add to this that most of the Collects have what Lord Macaulay says the sonnets of Milton have *not*—epigrammatic point. While the sonnet which Lord Macaulay calls a collect in verse, is quite kindred to the Collects in respect of “unity of sentiment and severity of style,” it by no means resembles them in terseness and compression. There are, in fact, three petitions, all ringing the changes upon one idea, “Avenge,” “Forget not,” “Record their groans,” as well as an aspiration appended to the last of them.

³ “While the East soars to God in exclamations of angelic self-forgetfulness, the West comprehends all the spiritual needs of man in Collects of matchless profundity; reminding us of the alleged distinction between the Seraphim, who love most, and the Cherubim, who know most.” Freeman’s “Principles of Divine Service,” vol. i. p. 274. [Ed. ii., Oxford and London, 1863.]

I am indebted for the above references, as also for much help in this work generally, to Canon Bright’s admirable and very valuable volume on “Ancient Collects.”

where it is observable that “the prayers of saints” are spoken of, not as being themselves incense, but as requiring incense to be put to them. “And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel’s hand.”¹

Prayer has an outward and an inward part. The outward part is the expression or language in which it is couched; the inward part is the sentiment expressed. It may perhaps be said that in ejaculatory, as distinct from set prayer, the expression is not of so much moment, though even here, if the heart of the petitioner is duly impressed with the presence and majesty of Him to whom he addresses himself, the language will always be simple and chastised, however little studied. But let no one think that in set forms of prayer the language chosen to be the vehicle of devotion need not be, and ought not to be, studied. The symbol employed in Holy Scripture to denote the outward part of a prayer is a “golden vial,” or, as the word might be more properly rendered, a golden cup, vase, or urn. The material, the costliest metal—gold; the form graceful, as were all the household implements of the ancients. The words employed in prayer should be sound, sterling words; and the method of their arrangement felicitous and elegant. Is not this exactly the case with our Collects? Are not the words employed in them the purest and best English known—representing to us our language, when it was in full vigour, and just about reaching its prime? Is there not abundant evidence in

¹ Rev. viii. 3, 4.

the translated Collects, that both the original composers and the translators have bestowed much study and pains on the words used? And in the arrangement of these words, the balancing of clauses, and the giving unity to the whole composition, they have been as happy as in their choice of words. Let any one try to write (say) an epitaph with as much unity of design, as much point, as much elegance, and as much brevity as the Collects are written with, and, in proportion to the difficulty which he finds in achieving such a task, will the elaborate skill with which these prayers have been constructed rise in his estimation. Nor let it be thought that elaborate skill bestowed on the wording of set prayers is out of place. The Psalms are the Church's inspired Prayer Book. And what are the Psalms but compositions of the most elaborate kind, as every one who has studied them in the original knows,—almost made, one might say, by rule and square; some of them acrostics, like the sections of the hundred and nineteenth Psalm; and in all of them stanza corresponding to stanza, antistrophe to strophe; and parallelism, the great principle of Hebrew poetry, running through them all?

But important as the outward part of prayer is, it is not so important as the sentiment of which it is the vehicle. After all, the "golden vial" is but a vehicle of the sweet odours or "incense." Now the sentiment expressed in a prayer, viewed as entertained by ourselves, may be of two kinds;—it may be a sentiment grasped merely by the understanding, or a sentiment echoed by the heart; we may nakedly *perceive* such and such an object to be desirable, or we may *feel* it to be desirable. Now, as to the first of these, how do we know a certain prayer to be legitimate, a certain object to be desirable? St. Paul

says that "we know not what we should pray for as we ought."¹ But by His Spirit in the Holy Scriptures God hath revealed to us what are just objects of desire, and what not. And thus the first recommendation of the sentiment of a prayer is that it should be Scriptural—in conformity, that is, with the mind of God, as revealed to us in His written word. This is the fragrant odour, the sweet incense, with which we should perfume our prayers; and this is just the secret of the generally acknowledged power and unction of Bishop Andrewes's Prayers, that they live and move and have their being in the element of Holy Scripture. And thoroughly Scriptural are these Collects of ours also; the translated ones *profoundly* Scriptural, for in them the reference to Scripture is more recondite, more in the sentiment and less in the phraseology, but yet leaps to light after a very little study, and surprises us by its beauty and significance; the new ones *patently* Scriptural, and for the most part citing the actual words of Inspiration, so as to draw attention to a particular passage.

But we may perceive the sentiment of a prayer to be just, beautiful, Scriptural, and in conformity with God's mind, and yet feel unable to throw into it our desires, affections, longings, which are the true "odours" of which the "golden vial" is the vehicle. To see that we ought fervently to desire such and such an object is one thing; fervently to desire it is another. What shall we do when our hearts are dry in prayer, when, if there be incense in them, it is incense unkindled, which emits no fragrance? There was in the Jewish ritual an offering of *unkindled* incense, from which perhaps we may gather a useful lesson. The lower sort of incense, consisting of

¹ Rom. viii. 26.

a single gum (*lebonah*) was placed in golden saucers or vials on the shewbread, and this, unlike the higher incense,—a compound of several sweet spices, which was offered every morning and evening upon the altar of incense,—*was never burned*. There it lay before God in the stillness of His sanctuary, shone down upon by the quiet, solemn light of the seven-branched candlestick, but never touching the live coals on the incense altar, nor ascending in a fragrant cloud towards heaven. What an admirable emblem of a prayer without unction or fervour,—when we sincerely wish and mean to pray, but our minds are dry and hard, when even to collect the attention is a painful effort, and the whole service throughout is one long struggle to retain it. We know that, if the feelings and affections were enlisted, prayer would seem to soar on the wings of a favourable wind from our hearts to heaven; but at present there seems to be no heart in the exercise. Well, if we have done our best by honest effort, if our mind and will is to pray, the best method of attaining the object is not to fret and chafe ourselves in fruitless endeavours, but simply to fall back on the thought of the presence of Christ, and to wait upon Him in silence and patience till the light of His countenance stream in upon the soul, even as the unkindled incense was simply set out before God in the light of the candlestick. Let us dwell upon the thought that He, the great Angel of the covenant, is in the midst of us, adding the sweet incense of His intercession to the prayers of His people, that they may be purged of the sin that is in them, and graciously accepted. We shall not wait long upon Him duly and duteously, before He will turn the dry incense of the shewbread-table into the kindled fragrant incense of the altar. He will send down His Holy Spirit, the true fire

from heaven, upon the affections of the heart, and kindle them and make them aspire towards Himself. Prayer needs, to make it effectual—indeed to make it prayer at all—the work both of the Son and of the Spirit of God ; of the one to intercede without, of the other to stir the cold and dead affections within. Thus aided, thus stirred, it rises far above clouds and skies and stars into God's presence-chamber, as naturally as kindled incense streams upwards, and becomes infinitely acceptable to Him through the merits of His Son—"an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God."¹ "Let my prayer"—whether only a simple waiting upon God by consciousness of His presence, or the speaking to Him out of a full heart when, in the midst of our "musings," "the fire kindles"²—"be set forth before thee as incense."³

¹ Philip. iv. 18.² Psalm xxxix. 3.³ Psalm cxli. 2.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE ORIGIN OF THE WORD COLLECT.

If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.—S. MATT. xviii. 19, 20.

THE word Collect seems to be used in the Book of Common Prayer in a stricter and in a laxer sense. In the strictest sense of the word, those prayers only are Collects, which are used as the characteristic prayer of the week at the Holy Communion, and which have an Epistle and Gospel associated with them. These are called, in the heading of that section of the Prayer Book in which they are contained, "The Collects . . . to be used throughout the year," and, at the first mention of Collects in the Morning Prayer, "Collects of the Day." The Collect in this, the strictest sense, is, as Archdeacon Freeman has shown, a Eucharistic prayer, condensing the devotional thought which is suggested by the Epistle and Gospel, and keeping it before the mind during the week. Under this first head will fall the last prayer in "the Order for the Burial of the Dead," which is in the strictest and highest sense a Collect, as having formerly had an Epistle and Gospel associated with it. This is shown more at large in the next Chapter, "On the structure of a Collect."—Next to "the Collect of the Day," the opening Collect at the Communion lays

claim to the name. It does not, indeed, summarise the teaching of the Epistle and Gospel ; but it may be justly said to summarise our *preparation* for the Eucharist, which must consist in the “cleansing of the thoughts of the heart by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.”—The next step of descent in the meaning of the word is its application to those prayers in “the Ministration of Publick Baptism,” which precede the administration of the Sacrament. These are called “Collects” in the following rubric of “the Ministration of Private Baptism of Children in Houses ;” “First, let the Minister of the Parish (or, in his absence, any other lawful Minister that can be procured) with them that are present call upon God, and say the Lord’s Prayer, and so many of the *Collects appointed to be said before in the Form of Publick Baptism*, as the time and present exigence will suffer.” And be it remarked that the Collects here, as well as those of the Eucharistic Service, are associated with, and summarise the teaching of, a Gospel,—either that of the Infant Office, which tells how little children were brought unto Christ, or that of the Adult Office, which sets forth the necessity of the birth of water and the Spirit.—Next in order come Collects which are not associated with, and do not (at least designedly) embody the teaching of any particular passages of Holy Scripture. Thus two Collects, besides that of the Day, are appointed to be said at Morning, and two at Evening Prayer, and in the Rubric regulating the use of those Collects which are “to be said after the Offertory, when there is no Communion,” mention is made also of Collects of the Litany ;—“the same may be said also after the Collects either of Morning or Evening Prayer, Communion, or *Litany*, by the discretion of the Minister.” The Collects of the Litany must, we suppose,

mean its two prayers (*orationes*), "O God, merciful Father," and "We humbly beseech thee, O Father," both of which are prefaced by "Let us pray" (*Oremus*), as distinct from its suffrages and its responsive supplications (*preces*). Both these are somewhat less compact, and more diffuse, than the Prayers called Collects in the stricter sense.—Diffuse in its subjects, as well as in its style, is the "Prayer for all Conditions of Men," which, in the heading of it, is called "*A Collect or Prayer*," the two terms being regarded as nearly equivalent, which, indeed, in the laxer use of the term "Collect," they are.—Least of all entitled to the name Collect are the two prayers for the Queen in the Office of the Holy Communion, which yet are unequivocally called so in the Rubric prescribing them, "Then shall follow one of these two Collects for the Queen." I say that they are least entitled to the name, because one of the characteristics of Collects is that they are prayers of general import, not of special application; usually they embrace the wants of the entire community of Christians (as represented by the congregation in which they are offered), and therefore, in the strict sense of the word, Intercessions for particular persons, or classes of persons, are not comprehended under it.—Let so much be said at the outset as to the various shades of meaning which the word Collect bears in our Book of Common Prayer. It is only with the Collects of the Day, together with the opening and closing Collects of the Communion Office, that the present work proposes to deal.

As to the derivation of the word, it is a doubtful point, and the learned in such matters are divided in opinion. The Latin word is *Collecta*, which may mean a gathering of any sort—of money, as at a collection in church for some

charitable object ; or of people, as when two or three are "gathered together" for common prayer ; or of subjects of thought or study, as when an author at the end of a Chapter gathers up in a short summary or recapitulates what he has said. The question then arises, What is it which in a Collect is gathered up or collected ? Some say the prayers of the people, which the priest, in using the Collect, gathers up into one compendium and presents before God. Some say it is the teaching of Holy Scripture, and more especially of the Epistle and Gospel for the day, which is gathered up and condensed in a Collect. Other some think that the word may denote that collectedness of mind which is required in all true worship, and which the Collects, so full of thought, and yet of thought closely packed and succinctly expressed, well represent. While others, again, hold that the gathering denoted by the word *Collecta* is simply a gathering of people, and that the full name of a Collect, of which the word *Collecta* is merely an abbreviation, is *oratio ad collectam*, a prayer to be used at the gathering together of the people for divine worship. To my mind this last explanation of the word seems to be, not indeed the most attractive, but the most likely to be the true one. But, as each of the above derivations has something to be said in its favour, and has found theologians to advocate it, it may be well to consider what useful lesson each of them, even if incorrect as a derivation, may have to teach us.

1. And, first, as to the gathering up into one compendious form the prayers of the people. Whether or not the Collects take their name of Collects from this circumstance, certain it is that they do as a fact concentrate in one focus, and (as it were) bring to bear upon one point, the straggling rays of prayer. Three Collects at Morning and

Evening Prayer immediately succeed the Versicles, that is, the brief petitions which the people use interchangeably with the minister. It will be found that these three Collects sum up, if not all, yet many of the petitions made in the versicles. Thus, "Give peace in our time, O Lord," finds itself represented in the Morning and Evening Collects for Peace. The Collect for Grace at Morning Prayer gathers up into itself the versicles, "O God, make clean our hearts within us," "And take not thy holy Spirit from us." The Collect for Aid against all Perils is an echo of the touching plea which precedes, "Because there is none other that fighteth for us, but only thou, O God." While mercy, salvation, and blessing, the things sued for in other versicles, are the subjects of many of the Communion Collects, which at Morning and Evening Prayer always take precedence of the two others. This summarising of the people's aspirations by the priest may remind us usefully of that part of the Jewish ritual in which, while the priest in the holy place burned incense on the incense-altar, the whole multitude of the people stood praying without at the time of incense;¹ and still more usefully may this function of the merely human and sinful priest remind us of the great High Priest, who in the screened sanctuary of heaven mingles the fragrant incense of His intercession with the fragmentary, broken prayer-utterances of His people—an incense which comes with the prayers of the saints,² and ascends up before God with acceptance, finding a ready passage to His ear and His heart. If the Collects, offered by the priest after the brief joint petitions, speak to us of Christ's taking up into His mouth above the feeble halting aspirations, which we breathe towards God from the earth, we shall have derived

¹ See St. Luke i. 9, 10.

² See Rev. viii. 3, 4.

edification from the position which in the Morning and Evening Prayer they occupy.

2. Secondly. The teaching of the Epistle and Gospel *usually*, and the teaching of some part of Holy Scripture *always*, is summarised and recapitulated in the Collect. How deeply the Collects are imbued with Scriptural thought and phraseology was pointed out in the last Chapter; and attention will be further called to this point, when we come to consider the structure of these prayers. For the present, suffice it to say that, although in man's natural state prayer has always struggled up from his heart to the great Being above him, of whose existence and power reason has given him an inkling, yet the prayer of man under Revelation must be something higher and more assured than this blind groping after God,—it must be *a word of man to God, based and built upon a word of God to man.*

3. Thirdly. It has been supposed that the word Collect is derived from that concentration of mind and feeling, which is required in the offerer of the Collect. While this is too far-fetched to be the real derivation of the word, there can be no doubt that one of the principal features of the prayers called Collects is the compression of a very wide range of thought into the fewest possible words; it is as if the composer had always held that precept of the wise man before his eyes, which so condemns diffuse, rambling, and repetitious prayers; “Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.”¹ Nor can the lesson be ever out of place, that collectedness of mind is the first requisite of all prayer deserving of the name,

¹ Eccles. v. 2.

and is more especially demanded in those prayers which, like the Lord's Prayer supremely, and the Collects in a lower but still in an eminent degree, have a significance out of all proportion to their bulk. This is the real reason why the excellence of the Collects eludes the observation of the shallow-minded religionist, and why it is so necessary that the stores of devotional feeling to be found in them should be, as it were, unpacked and exhibited, which indeed is our chief business in the present work. If the commissioners appointed in 1689 to revise the Book of Common Prayer,¹ though numbering among them such men as Tillotson, Stillingfleet, and Patrick, laboured under so much false taste as to propose that Patrick should "make the Collects longer by way of making them more affecting,"² how can ordinary minds, without any training in theology, be brought to appreciate their excellence, unless the teaching which is in them is developed, and attention called to it? As to the recollectedness of mind, which is essential to all real prayer, our Lord exhorts to it when He says; "Thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and, when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret,"³—

¹ Of this Commission Lord Macaulay writes ("History of England," chap. xiv. vol. iii. p. 470, London, 1855): "Most of the Bishops who had taken the oaths were in this commission; and with them were joined twenty priests of great note. Of the twenty Tillotson was the most important, for he was known to speak the sense both of the King and of the Queen. Among those Commissioners who looked up to Tillotson as their chief were Stillingfleet, Dean of St. Paul's, Sharp, Dean of Norwich, Patrick, Dean of Peterborough, Tenison, Rector of St. Martin's, and Fowler With such men as those who have been named were mingled some divines who belonged to the High Church party. Conspicuous among these were two of the rulers of Oxford, Aldrich and Jane."

² Bright's "Ancient Collects," p. 197. [Oxford and London, 1869.]

³ St. Matthew vi. 6.

the "closet" meaning, as Augustine has well pointed out, not so much a private apartment as the screened chamber of the heart,¹ open to none but Him that seeth in secret, where the solitary lamp of the consciousness burns ever before God, like the seven-branched candlestick in the holy place of the Jewish Tabernacle.

4. The last derivation of the word, and that which to my mind commends itself most, the others being, I think, too subtle to be probable, is that which takes *Collecta* to be short for *Oratio ad Collectam*, a prayer at the assembling of the people for worship. I may here mention that the word *Collecta* is used several times in the Vulgate (or Latin translation of the Scriptures, which may be called the Authorised Version of the Church of Rome) to denote those "solemn assemblies," with which (usually on the octave, or eighth day after their commencement) the Jewish festivals were closed. The Hebrew word employed is by the English translators uniformly rendered "solemn assembly."² And we may connect this derivation of the

¹ See "Opp.," tom. iv. pars ii. col. 1579, E. F. Enarratio in Psalmum cxli. [Parisiis, 1691.] "What is it to shut the door?" says Augustine. "This door hath, as it were, two leaves, one of desire the other of fear. Either thou desirest some earthly thing, and by this way he" (the devil) "entereth; or thou fearest some earthly thing, and by this way he entereth. Shut, therefore, the door of fear and desire against the devil, and open it unto Christ. And how openest thou these leaves unto Christ? By desiring the kingdom of heaven; by fearing the fire of hell. Through the lust of the world the devil entereth; through the desire of life eternal entereth Christ; through fear of temporal penalties the devil entereth; through fear of the eternal fire entereth Christ."

² The word is עֲצֶרֶת (ngätse-reth), a retention or day of restraint, from עָצַר (ngä-tsör) to restrain, shut up, hold in check, rule. The last days of the Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles are especially called thus, either because the people were retained to attend them, or labour was restrained on those days. The word occurs in Lev. xxiii. 36; Num. xxix. 35; Deut. xvi. 8; 2 Kings x. 20 (where the "solemn assembly" is one held to

word with one of the features of the Collects, which is, that they are all general prayers, applicable to the whole of God's household the Church, representing the spiritual necessities of all, and therefore offered by all in common. The prayers for the Queen, for the Royal Family, and for the Clergy, are *not* (strictly speaking)¹ Collects, because they have a special reference to certain classes of the community ; nor is such a reference found in any prayer styled a Collect, with the exception of a very incidental and altogether parenthetical allusion, which is made to the deceased in the magnificent Collect of the Burial Service. Thus the Collect, if we accept this as the true origin of the word, brings before us the precious promise of our Lord to the two or three who agree as to the object of their petitions, a promise by which He pledges Himself that, if they meet in His name,—if the hearts of those who come together do so in recognition of Him, and design what they do as an act of homage to Him,—there shall be more than two or three ; an invisible and mysterious form shall stand in the midst of them, even the form of Him who was visibly present in the furnace with the three holy children,² and His presence and intercession shall open the windows of heaven, and bring down in God's due time the blessing for which the little flock have agreed to sue.

Baal) ; 2 Chron. vii. 9 ; Neh. viii. 18 ; Joel i. 14, and ii. 15 ; in all which places it is translated "solemn assembly." The "solemn assembly" of Zeph. iii. 18, is represented by a different Hebrew word, which means simply a "gathering."

¹ See what is said at the beginning of this Chapter on the application of the term "Collect" to the two prayers for the Queen in the Communion Service. In the Order for Morning and Evening Prayer, the prayer for the Sovereign, with those for the Royal Family, and the Clergy and people, are more accurately called "Prayers."

² See Dan. iii. 25.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE STRUCTURE OF A COLLECT, AS ILLUSTRATED BY THE COLLECT IN THE BURIAL SERVICE.

THE Collects are all of them framed on one plan, although in some of them the plan is imperfectly worked out. All are not perfect specimens ; some want one member, some another. The plan is well worth considering, not only as exhibiting what may be called the theory of a Collect, but also as teaching incidentally many edifying lessons respecting prayer.

1. Every house which is to stand securely must have a foundation ; every prayer, which is to reach to heaven, must be built on some part of God's revelation of Himself. Man could never have spoken a word to God, except in the first instance God had spoken a word to him. And if I am reminded that prayer is known and practised by the whole family of man, heathens as well as others, my answer is that even to the heathen God has revealed Himself in Nature, and has spoken through their conscience. If nature did not give the heathen some intimations of the existence of an all-wise, all-powerful, and most beneficent Creator, and if conscience did not assure them that this Creator is a Judge to whom they are morally accountable, is it conceivable that they could pray ? The Syrophœnician built the renewal of her

request to Christ upon a fact she had observed in nature, which was that even dogs were not neglected, that some provision is made for them in the system of Divine Providence.¹—The Collects, therefore, have their foundation laid in some word of God. In a perfect specimen, immediately after the invocation (that is, the name or title by which God is invoked), follows the recital of some doctrine or else of some fact, connected with, if not forming part of, the plan of redemption. As it is necessary to have before us an example, for the illustration of what is said, we will choose for that purpose the Collect in the Burial Office, which made its first appearance at the Reformation, and is certainly one of the fullest and finest we have. It is only necessary to say, by way of preface, that in the first draught of Edward VI.'s Prayer-Book, put forth in 1549, it was contemplated that very often there would be a celebration of the Holy Communion at the Burial of the Dead; that for this celebration a special Introit, Collect, Epistle, and Gospel were provided, the Epistle being that passage of the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, in which St. Paul bids the Thessalonian mourners "sorrow not, even as others which have no hope," because God would "bring with" Jesus their friends who slept in Him;² and the Gospel that passage of St. John, in which our Lord promises to raise up at the last day "every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him"³ (both unspeakably consolatory passages); but that every special provision for the celebration of the Holy Communion at funerals was ruthlessly swept away in drawing up the Prayer Book of 1552, out of a fear (not unreasonable, perhaps, nor, under the circumstances, unjustifiable) of giving countenance to masses for the

¹ St. Mark vii. 26, 28.

² 1 Thess. iv. 13, 14.

³ St. John vi. 40.

dead ; and now, alas ! all that remains is the word *Collect*, prefixed to the last prayer of the Burial Service. If the Church will abuse God's holiest ordinances to superstition, she must smart for it by the forfeiture of some things which, though not essential, are precious and consolatory.—The invocation of the Collect in question is : “ O Merciful God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ;” and the doctrines upon which the petition is based, and which are drawn from the opening sentence of the Burial Service and from the Epistle appointed for the occasion, are—“ who is the resurrection and the life ; in whom whosoever believeth shall live, though he die ; and whosoever liveth, and believeth in him, shall not die eternally ; who also hath taught us, by his holy Apostle Saint Paul, not to be sorry, as men without hope, for them that sleep in him.”

2. Next after the invocation and doctrine of a Collect comes the actual petition, which constitutes the body of the prayer. This is the central point of the composition, to which all that goes before leads up, and out of which grows all that follows. In the present instance it is ; “ We meekly beseech thee, O Father, to raise us from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness.” Observe the close connexion of thought with what has preceded. The life of righteousness is by faith, and it can only be led by the power of the principle called faith, according to the words of our Lord rehearsed in the doctrinal clause of the Collect, “ I am the resurrection and the life : he that *believeth* in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live : and whosoever liveth and *believeth* in me shall never die.”—Though we are only using the Collect now for the purpose of illustrating the general structure of these prayers, and therefore any observation on the phraseology employed is a little out of place, it is hard to refrain from

calling attention to the adverb "meekly" in "We meekly beseech thee," which is somewhat peculiar and full of beautiful significance. What is a *meek* request? Is it a *humble* request? Is "We meekly beseech thee" exactly equivalent to "We humbly beseech thee?" Not quite. The "poor in spirit" of the first beatitude are not exactly the same characters as the "meek" of the third.¹ We are humble when we in some measure realise God's greatness and goodness, and our own littleness and vileness; we are meek when, in addition to doing this, we wait upon Him quietly and patiently for what He sees fit to give, laying all our heart's wishes open before Him indeed, according to His precept, but not presuming to dictate to Him, and resigning our wills to Him in case He should not be pleased to gratify our desires. There is in meekness an element of acquiescence, which is not equally apparent in humility; and acquiescence is the frame of mind suitable for mourners, who have just said, as they followed into the church the body of their departed friend; "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the Name of the Lord." Now by the side of the grave they pray, "We *meekly* beseech thee, O Father," etc.

3. The next member of a Collect, and a very important one, which is seldom wanting in any specimen, is the aspiration, or devout wish with which it closes. In the case before us, this grows most beautifully out of the petition. That petition is for the life by faith, which, as we have seen, is a life of righteousness; "We meekly beseech thee, O Father, to raise us from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness." And this life of faith, if prosecuted to the end, will lead on to a life of blessedness hereafter, a life which will have two sections—first, a

¹ See St. Matt. v. 3, 5.

porch (or vestibule) of repose, and then a mansion of royalty and glory. For both these the offerer of this Collect sends up at the close of it a devout sigh to heaven;—"that, when we shall depart this life, we may rest in him, as our hope is this our brother doth." Here is the devout sigh for the Paradise-state, for the green pastures, where the wearied, footsore pilgrim shall be made by the good Shepherd to lie down, and for the waters of comfort,¹ along whose quiet margin he shall be led when his eyes have closed on this world. "And that, at the general Resurrection in the last day, we may be found acceptable in thy sight; and receive that blessing, which thy well-beloved Son shall then pronounce to all that love and fear thee, saying, Come, ye blessed children of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world." Here is the devout sigh for the glories of the everlasting kingdom, offered up in the first instance for each one of us by the side of the font, as we now offer it for ourselves by the side of the sepulchre. For, from the side of the font this prayer rose for each one of us, "that finally he may come to the land of everlasting life, there to reign with thee world without end."

The aspiration with which the petition of each Collect closes is as it were the wing to the petition, the feather which carries the arrow of prayer right up to the habitation of God's holiness and glory in heaven. It may well remind us of the indispensability of fervour to the acceptance and success of our prayers—that, if we would have them answered, we must not only ask, but seek (with diligence and carefulness, as the woman in the parable sought for the lost coin²); not only seek, but knock,³ as Peter "continued knocking"⁴ when the door of Mary's house was

¹ See Psalm xxiii. 2.

² See St. Luke xv. 8.

³ *Ib.* xi. 9.

⁴ See Acts xii. 16.

not at first opened—assured that there is One within who hearkens, and only delays an answer in order to draw out importunity and earnestness. Winged with fervent aspirations, our prayers shall assuredly soar above clouds, and skies, and stars, to the very throne of God, and awaken the sympathy and draw down the succour of Christ. And if it be said almost despairingly that there are times when we *cannot* have fervour in prayer, when the mind is dry and hard, or hopelessly distracted, when all things seem to come to an end with us, and the will is almost paralysed for any spiritual or moral effort; this is most true, alas! but the only remedy is to be found, not in giving over, but in persistence, until the necessary fervour comes, and the feather is put to the shaft of our prayer. Is it not said, “They that wait upon the Lord,” meekly and patiently attending at the throne of grace, instead of putting off the application to a more convenient season, “shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles” (the holy aspiration shall be the wing, while the Holy Spirit shall be the wind); “they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint”?¹

The constituent parts of a Collect, then, are—1st, the invocation; 2dly, the recital of some doctrine or fact, which is made the basis of the petition; 3dly, the petition itself, which rises upon this basis; 4thly, the aspiration, which is the feather or wing to the petition; 5thly, in all Collects addressed to the Father, the alleging of the Mediator’s work on our behalf, and the pleading of His Name, which, it need hardly be said, is the alone procuring cause of the acceptance of any prayer. For the various forms in which this is done, and for the termination of Collects generally, the reader is referred to the Appendix to Chapter I. of Book II., Part II., p. 94.

¹ Isaiah xl. 31.

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE SOURCES OF THE COLLECTS: AND FIRST, OF THE SACRAMENTARY OF LEO.

As a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.—GENESIS xxxii. 28.

THE sources of the Pre-Reformation Collects are to be found in the old Sacramentaries. What is a Sacramentary? For at least the first thousand years of the Church's existence there was no single book which contained the whole service of the Holy Communion or (as it was then called) the Mass. This service was contained in four books; the Lectionary, containing the portions of Scripture which were read as Epistles; the Evangelistary, containing the Gospels; the Antiphonary, containing the Anthems (which were called Introits, Communions, or Post-Communions, according as they were sung at the opening of the service, or during, or subsequently to, the administration); and, finally, the Sacramentary, which contained the Collects, together with the body of the service, which never changed under any circumstances, and which was called the Canon of the Mass.¹ Imagine our

¹ See Blunt's "Annotated Book of Common Prayer," "Introduction to the Collects, Epistles, and Gospels," p. 68. [London, 1866.] Sir W. Palmer tells us that sometimes the Gospels, as well as the Epistles, were contained in the Lectionary (thus making only three books in all), and that it was not till "the eleventh or twelfth century" that "it was found convenient generally to unite these three books, and the volume obtained the name of the Complete or Plenary Missal, or Book of Missæ." Palmer's "Origines Liturgicæ," chap. iii. vol. i. p. 308. [Oxford, 1836.]

Collects severed from their Epistles and Gospels, and printed in a separate volume with the "Order of the Administration of the Lord's Supper, or Holy Communion ;" and that would be the Sacramentary of the Church of England. The earliest in date of the Sacramentaries goes under the name of Leo I., who was Pope, or Bishop of Rome, from A.D. 440 to A.D. 461. We need not suppose that it, or any other Sacramentary, was entirely composed by the prelate whose name it bears. Many parts of it, no doubt, were so composed ; but in other parts the Sacramentary would be a compilation rather than a composition—an arrangement, that is, of previously existing materials, of much the same sort as was made by our Reformers, when they adapted the old Latin offices to the use of the Reformed Church. As seven¹ of our Communion Collects come from Leo, that is, were either composed or adopted by him, and as these seven are the oldest of all, some notice of him may be acceptable and useful.

Leo is the chief figure in the Ecclesiastical History of the fifth century ; he was the first of the Roman Bishops who was qualified by strength of will, force of character, insight into men's minds, and general political capacity, to influence widely the affairs of men ; a circumstance which posterity has acknowledged by assigning to him, in common with his successor Gregory I., the title of "the Great." His main faults of conduct and administration were due to that towering ambition, which has been the snare of many great minds. He it was who first conceived and asserted the claim of the Roman Bishop to supremacy over all the Churches of Christendom, vindi-

¹ Those for the Third Sunday after Easter, and for the Fifth, Ninth, Tenth, Twelfth, Thirteenth, and Fourteenth Sundays after Trinity. See Bright's "Ancient Collects," pp. 208, 209.

cating to himself alone the title, which hitherto all bishops had borne, of *Papa*, that is, father of the Church. In exercising the powers, which he thus arrogantly usurped, he first imprisoned and then deposed Hilary of Arles (whose chief fault seems to have been that he maintained the independence of the Gallican Church), and, while warmly approving of and sanctioning the definitions of faith made at the fourth General Council, that of Chalcedon, stoutly protested against its twenty-ninth canon, agreed to (as he said) when his legates had turned their backs, by which it was decreed that, as Constantinople was new Rome, its Patriarch should be independent, and take rank in the hierarchy second after himself. But the appearance of tares in the harvest-field, whether of the Church or of the individual soul, does not exclude the presence of wheat; and there were better and far more Christian traits in Leo's character than these. He was a diligent and powerful preacher, and often mentions preaching as "the most indispensable duty of pastors,"¹ more especially of the Episcopal order. He was exceedingly scrupulous in observing the Apostle's rule to "lay hands suddenly on no man,"² insisting upon the importance of never raising to the priesthood any one not sufficiently tried, and who had not given sufficient proofs of submission to authority and loving observance of discipline. And it is all of a piece with this last notice of him, that so large a proportion of his sermons should be on the Ember fasts.³ But the great debt which the Church owes to Leo is the definition of the true faith on the doc-

¹ See Alban Butler's "Lives of the Saints," St. Leo the Great, April 11, vol. iv. p. 105. [Edinburgh, 1798.] ² 1 Tim. v. 22.

³ There are four Sermons on the Ember Days after Pentecost (*De Jejuniis Pentecostes*); nine on the Ember Days of September (*De Jejuniis Septimi Mensis*); and nine on those of December (*De Jejuniis Decimi Mensis*). Ninety-five Sermons in all have come down to us.

trine of our Saviour's person. Nestorius had taught that there were two persons in Christ—one the Son of God, the other the Son of Mary, the latter being made over to, and intimately associated with, the former. Eutyches, in Leo's pontificate, fell into the opposite error, maintaining that there was only one nature in Christ—the Divine; His body being merely the tabernacle for the indwelling of His divinity. The first doctrine, if carried to its legitimate consequences, would do away with the Saviour's representative character, which is the ground of all our hopes; for if the Son of God took to Himself not human nature, but a human person, only that person would have had an interest in Him before God, and not the entire race of man. And the second, or Eutychian, doctrine tends to undermine the sympathy of Christ. For if our blessed Lord had not a real human nature, was not possessed of human affections and sensibilities, as well as of a human body, how can He be a high priest who is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities"?¹ Leo vindicated for the Church both these precious truths—the representative character, and the sympathy, of Christ—in a masterly and luminous letter to Flavian, Patriarch of Constantinople, which was read at the General Council of Chalcedon, and, finding general acceptance, was declared to be the dictate of the Holy Ghost, and was made the basis of the decision which condemned Eutyches. Thus Leo had a large share in drawing up those definitions of faith, every point of which had to be struggled and fought for in those early days by the Church's faithful children, but which, emerging triumphantly from the ordeal through which they once passed, have descended as a precious heirloom to the modern Church, an heirloom in which she finds treasures of joy, and consolation, and spiritual strength.

¹ See Heb. iv. 15.

That Leo's influence by the legates whom he sent to Chalcedon (for he was unable to attend the council in person) should have sufficed entirely to reverse the decisions of the then recent second Council of Ephesus, in which the doctrine of Eutyches had been *approved*, shows the power which he exercised on the minds of his contemporaries in the Church. The world had had a taste of this power previously. Before he was raised to the Papal chair, and when he was only Archdeacon of Rome, he was sent into Gaul as a peacemaker between the two great generals, Aëtius and Albinus—the former of them an unprincipled man, who had risen by his military talents and successes to the highest position in the Empire, and having thus attracted the jealousy of the Emperor, was eventually murdered by him. Leo discharged his embassy of peace with such judgment and tact as to soothe Aëtius, and to extinguish a dissension which, if it had been suffered to proceed to the bitter end, might have precipitated the downfall of Rome. But his marvellous power over men was still more shown in his interview with the Hun Attila. This savage heathen conqueror, who united under his sway the German and the Slavonic nations, who claimed to hold the sword of the Scythian Mars, and whose very name was such a watchword of terror in the civilised portion of the Empire that he was known as "the scourge of God," had been infuriated by a defeat which he had sustained from Aëtius at Chalons—the last great defeat, as it may be called, which the arms of Rome ever inflicted on a hostile power. Like a bear robbed of her whelps, and making a descent on a sheepfold, he swept down upon Italy with his barbarian hordes, and having taken and destroyed the chief cities of the north, was advancing towards Rome, the land being before him

(according to that vivid prophetic description of a plague of locusts) "as the garden of Eden," and behind him "a desolate wilderness."¹ Things had now come to much the same pass with the Roman Empire as with the little kingdom of Judah at the time of Sennacherib's invasion; for, as the Assyrians had already carried the ten tribes of Israel into captivity, so Attila had already ravaged the Eastern Empire and made it tributary. The western emperor, joined by the whole population of the city, implored Leo to go on an embassy to Attila's camp on the Mincio—an enterprise which, considering the temper and recent disasters of the Hun, was one of considerable personal risk. Leo, and a senator named Avienus, put their lives in their hands and went. The result is thus given by the infidel historian Gibbon²:—"The pressing eloquence of Leo, his majestic aspect and sacerdotal robes, excited the veneration of Attila for the spiritual father of the Christians." The barbarian, after concluding a treaty of peace with the Roman Emperor, withdrew to his palace on the Danube, where he shortly after died by the rupture of an artery. Doubtless Leo had in his favour, in addition to the attributes which Gibbon mentions, the superstitious fears of the barbarian conqueror, awakened by the remembrance of the sudden death, which Alaric the Visigoth had met with after sacking the city, forty-three years previously to his own invasion. Still, whatever other motives were brought into play, the power exercised by Leo on the occasion cannot have been small, and an attempt is made to explain the sudden rolling back of the invasion at the intercession of the Roman Bishop in what Gibbon calls "one

¹ See Joel ii. 3.

² "Decline and Fall," chap. xxxv. vol. iv. p. 246. [Ed. Smith, Lond. 1854.]

of the noblest legends of ecclesiastical tradition.”¹ This asserts that the two apostles, Peter and Paul, appeared to Attila on either side of Leo, and threatened him with instant death if he laid sacrilegious hands on the city of their martyrdom. The whole story reads like a second version of Jaddua the high priest’s going out to meet Alexander the Great at the gate of Jerusalem, and Alexander’s saluting him with the greatest veneration, and desisting from those hostile designs upon the city, which the refusal of supplies to him by the Jews had led him to form.² Three years afterwards, Genseric the Vandal was induced by Leo, who with his clergy met him at the gates of Rome, to refrain, not indeed from sacking the city, but from burning it to the ground, and putting his captives to the torture.

In such colours did Leo show to the Church and to the world of his day. But what was he in the inner man of the heart, in the closet into which Christ bids us enter, to present our supplication before Him who seeth in secret?³ A man of God, we entirely believe; though, like

¹ The legendary account will be found in Baronius (“*Annales Ecclesiastici*”), under the year A.D. 452, sections lvii. lviii. Perhaps we should rather say “accounts,” for there are two—one that only St. Peter appeared to Attila, the other that St. Peter was accompanied by St. Paul.

² The story is told at length by Dean Prideaux in his “*Connexion*,” vol. i. 465, 466 [London, 1845], from Josephus, “*Ant.*” Bk. xi. chap. viii. secs. 4, 5. Just as, in Baronius’s account of the vision to Attila, the Hun is asked by those about him why, so entirely contrary to his usual custom, he acted so submissively towards the Roman Bishop, so, in Josephus’s account of Jaddua’s interview with Alexander, when other spectators of the issue suppose the great conqueror to be disordered in his mind, Parmenio asks how it is that “when all others adore him, he should adore the high priest of the Jews?” Alexander replies that he “adored not Jaddua, but the God whose priest Jaddua was; for that he had seen this very person in this very habit in a dream at Dios, when he was meditating the conquest of Asia, and that the figure had exhorted him to the enterprise, and had promised him success, etc.” See Josephus, *loc. cit.*;

³ See St. Matt. vi. 6.

many another man of God, with glaring faults of character, hidden from himself, doubtless, under the specious disguise of zeal for the honour of the Church. He who can teach others to pray, by putting into their mouths words which awaken an echo from every devout heart, must himself surely possess the secret of having power with God. And this did Leo. He was great as a prayer-composer and prayer-compiler. Here is one of his Collects,¹ so exactly suitable to the circumstances in which history exhibits him, that it may have been as much composed for these circumstances as many of David's Psalms were for the incidents of his chequered life: "Grant, O Lord, we beseech thee, that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by thy governance, that thy Church may joyfully serve thee in all godly quietness; through Jesus Christ our Lord." When the Goths, the Huns, and Vandals were hovering over the moribund Roman Empire, like a flight of vultures preparing to pounce upon a dying camel in the desert, as soon as the breath is out of his body, there was certainly some point, and there was likely to be some sincerity, in such a prayer. And when the English Church is in trouble from political or other movements (and is there not reason to fear that there is much trouble brewing for her?) we may perhaps find a resource in this Collect of Leo's said in faith and devotion.

¹ For the Fifth Sunday after Trinity.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE SACRAMENTARY OF GELASIUS.

Come unto me . . . and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you . . . and ye shall find rest.—S. MATT. xi. 28, 29.

AN interval of rather more than half a century separates the Pontificate of Leo, the composer of the first great Sacramentary which has come down to our times, from that of Gelasius, whose name the second bears, and who was raised to the Bishopric of Rome in the last decade of the fifth century, A.D. 492. This interval had been filled up by one of the most striking social and political movements the world had ever witnessed. The Roman Empire of the West had ceased to be. The barbarian Odoacer, who had begun life as a brigand, but had entered the imperial guard, and risen to eminence by his military talents, sat on the throne of the Cæsars. The last Emperor of the West, to whom was given, as if in irony upon his anticipated fortunes, the name of Augustulus (that is, the little Augustus), had been pensioned off with a yearly allowance of six thousand gold pieces, and exiled to the imperial villa of Misenum, where Tiberius had lived and died in the lap of luxury, and which was now turned into a gilded cage for the last of the Cæsars. And the empire was on the eve of another revolution at the time of Gelasius's appointment to the Roman bishopric. In the very next year (A.D. 493) Theodoric the Ostrogoth, at the head of a nation of barbarians, acting nominally on a

commission he had received from Zeno, the Emperor of the East, contrived the assassination of Odoacer, and having overrun the whole peninsula with his arms, succeeded him as king of Italy. It should be added that from the commencement of the century Rome had ceased to be the seat of the imperial government. The emperors had withdrawn to Ravenna, a great naval and military station on the Adriatic, and the barbarian kings who succeeded them made Ravenna their capital. The power of the Popes was at this period swelling itself out into those gigantic proportions which it was one day to reach, and it would almost seem as if, in the providence of God, which had predetermined this issue, the secular power had retired to a respectful distance, to make room for this usurped jurisdiction, not only over the civil allegiance, but over the soul and conscience of mankind.

In an interesting passage of his "*Latin Christianity*,"¹ Dean Milman observes upon the singular circumstance that the popes of this date "rarely notice" in their Epistles "the great changes in the civil society around them." "Of the fall of Augustulus, of the rise of Odoacer, we hear not a word." One reason which he suggests for this is, that the popes, inwardly conscious that their own power was waxing, did not care to make any very great cry because the imperial power was waning. Another reason, doubtless, was, that the popes were engaged in bitter religious controversy—a subject which has a tendency to absorb the whole mind to the exclusion of all other interests. But what if, in the Collects and prayers which the Roman bishops have left behind them, there are discoverable evident traces of the unquietness, which then prevailed in

¹ "*History of Latin Christianity*," Book III. chap. i. vol. i. pp. 211, 212. [London, 1857.]

the political world of Christendom? I suppose there are few thoughtful readers of the Prayer Book, who have not been at times struck with its constant supplications for peace and quietness, and with the sort of assumption which runs through it that the Church is in the presence of foes, from whose snares she needs to be delivered, and over whose opposition she needs to be made triumphant. Of course all these expressions are capable of, and ought to receive, a spiritual interpretation; but still they bear on them the stamp of having had a literal application originally; and the fact that they colour the services so largely requires to be accounted for. And probably the account is, that these prayers were hatched in a time of revolution and political agitations, in a time when an old order of things was being broken up and giving place to a new, when, in Scripture phrase, "all the foundations of the earth were out of course;"¹ when regular social life was put out of joint, commerce rudely stopped, and travelling made dangerous; when "the highways were unoccupied" (to use Deborah's forcible expression), "and the travellers walked through byways."² Here are a few of the traces, which those old revolutionary times have left on the Collects of Gelasius's Sacramentary: "Defend us thy humble servants in all assaults of our enemies; that we, surely trusting in thy defence, may not fear the power of any adversaries;"³ "that we being defended from the fear of our enemies may pass our time in rest and quietness;"⁴ "that so, among the sundry and manifold changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed, where true joys are to be found;"⁵ "O God, whose

¹ See Psalm lxxxii. 5.

² See Judges v. 6.

³ Second Collect at Morning Prayer.

⁴ Second Collect at Evening Prayer.

⁵ Collect for the Fourth Sunday after Easter.

never-failing providence ordereth all things both in heaven and earth; We humbly beseech thee to put away from us all hurtful things;”¹ “keep us, we beseech thee, from all things that may hurt us;”² “that, among all the changes and chances of this mortal life, they may ever be defended by thy most gracious and ready help”³ (this was originally a Collect appointed to be said at a mass for one going a journey); “O Lord, we beseech thee, let thy continual pity cleanse and defend thy Church; and, because it cannot continue in safety without thy succour, preserve it evermore by thy help and goodness.”⁴

Such passages, drawn from the twenty-eight⁵ and a half prayers which are first found in the Sacramentary of Gelasius, come to have a new and vivid meaning, when looked at under the light thrown upon them by his times.

His pontificate was short, lasting only four years. Unhappily he manifested the same strong tendency to lord it over God’s heritage, and to establish the ecclesiastical supremacy of the popes, of which his predecessor Leo, and more recently Felix III., had set the example.

¹ Collect for the Eighth Sunday after Trinity.

² Collect for the Twentieth Sunday after Trinity.

³ First Collect to be said after the Offertory, when there is no Communion.

⁴ Collect for the Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity.

⁵ Of Collects in the strictest sense (for the Communion, and having Epistle and Gospel) Canon Bright attributes twenty and a half to Gelasius’s Sacramentary (4th in Advent, Innocent’s Day, Palm Sunday, Good Friday II., first half of Easter Day, 4th and 5th after Easter, 1st, 2d, 6th, 7th, 8th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 15th, 16th, 18th, 19th, 20th, and 21st after Trinity); besides the Morning and Evening Collects for Peace, the Evening Collect for Aid against all Perils, the Prayer for the Clergy and people, “Assist us mercifully,” the Confirmation Prayer for the sevenfold Spirit, the prayer “O most merciful God” in the Visitation of the Sick, and the first Collect in the Communion Service—twenty-eight and a half in all.—Bright’s “Ancient Collects,” pp. 211-216.

The time, however, was not yet ripe for the claim of *empire over the world* which the popes were one day to set up; and we find Gelasius, in a letter to the Emperor of the East, now "the sole representative of Roman sovereignty," speaking of Church and State as by God's ordinance distinct in their respective spheres and rights: "Christ has separated for ever the two offices, leaving the emperors dependent on the pontiffs for their everlasting salvation, and the pontiffs dependent on the emperors for the administration of all temporal affairs."¹ Although pope, he was very much at issue with Popery as dogmatically settled ten centuries later by the Council of Trent; for, in expounding the doctrine of the Eucharist, he explicitly says that, while the right reception of the elements makes us partakers of the divine nature, yet nevertheless *these elements do not cease to have the substance (or nature) of bread and wine.*² The mystery, he says, is like that of the Incarnation, in which two whole and perfect natures were joined together without confusion in one Person; and we know from the part he took in other controversies of his time, that he would have resisted to the death the heresy that Christ had not a real and perfect human nature. But if He had such a nature, and if Gelasius's illustration is just, the bread and wine remain in their natural substances after consecration, as really and truly as Christ's human nature remained, when it was united in the moment of His conception with the

¹ Milman's "History of Latin Christianity," Book III. chap. i. vol. i. p. 236, note u.

² The words are: "*Certe sacramenta, quæ sumimus, corporis et sanguinis Christi, divina res est, propter quod et per eadem Divinæ efficimur consortes naturæ, et tamen esse non desinit substantia vel natura panis et vini.*"—Routh's "Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Opuscula," tom. ii. p. 139. [Oxonii, 1840.] I am indebted to Canon Bright for this reference.

Godhead. Yet this is exactly the view which the Council of Trent, in the second Canon of the thirteenth Session, pronounces to be wrong, and lays under anathema. Again ; he not only prohibited the reception of the Lord's Supper in one kind only, but declared such a division of one and the same mystery to be *grande sacrilegium*, a great¹ sacrilege, an unlawful putting asunder of things which God had joined together. This he did by way of detecting the Manichee heretics, who, as holding that wine, as well as several other natural substances, was impure, declined to receive the chalice in the sacrament, a custom which had been growing up also among others who were not Manichees. When Gelasius, therefore, ordered the reception of the sacrament in both kinds by all, it would thus be ascertained who were Manichees, and had discarded on principle the use of the cup. He was zealous also against the Pelagians, a sect of heretics of British, or rather Welsh, origin, who combated the doctrines of free grace, maintaining that men are born in a state of innocence, like Adam before his fall, and that victory over temptation is not gained by God's assistance, but by our own act of free will. When history tells us that Gelasius laboured with zeal to extirpate this heresy, and when we also learn that the Collect for the first Sunday after Trinity is drawn from his Sacramentary, once again we find his devotional utterances borrowing light from his times ; " O God, the strength of all them

¹ The decree of Gelasius, by way of detecting the Manichees, and the way in which Baronius tries to evade the force of it by quibbling upon the word *provenire*, may be seen in the "Annales Ecclesiastici," under date A.D. 496, sects. xx., xxi., xxii. The words are : " Let them (the Manichees) either receive the entire sacrament, or be prevented from receiving any part of it," *quia divisio unius ejusdemque mysterii sine grandi sacrilegio non potest provenire*.

that put their trust in thee, mercifully accept our prayers ; and because through the weakness of our mortal nature, we can do no good thing without thee, grant us the help of thy grace, that in keeping of thy commandments we may please thee both in will and deed." When we use that Collect, we are, however unconsciously, protesting against one of the deadliest heresies which ever ravaged the Church of Christ, and which is explicitly condemned in the ninth and tenth articles of the Church of England. —But the greatest devotional gem of Gelasius's Sacramentary is the Second Collect for Peace, appointed to be said daily at Evensong in the English Church ; a prayer which, perhaps, is dearer to the heart of the devout than any other in the whole Prayer Book, the Lord's own Prayer only excepted ; " O God, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed ; Give unto thy servants that peace which the world cannot give ; that both our hearts may be set to obey thy commandments, and also that by thee we being defended from the fear of our enemies may pass our time in rest and quietness." Observe the progress of divine grace in the heart, from the bud to the blossom, from the blossom to the full-formed fruit—" holy desires " first ; " good counsels " (or purposes) next ; " just " (or righteous) " works " last. And observe, too, how the whole prayer is based upon our Lord's invitation to the weary and heavy laden ; how the great truth is recognised that *the rest which is of God's giving* must be received and realised, before the heart *can* be set to obey God's commandments ; and that then, when this obedience is yielded, when Christ's yoke is borne, and His example faithfully imitated, then supervenes *the rest of man's finding*—" that we may pass our time in rest and quietness." Peace in the conscience through

Christ's blood ; then righteousness built on that peace ; then finally, as the fruit of righteousness, peace, and as "the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever."¹

One has seen at the root of a decaying tree tufts of wild hyacinths or primroses, engendered by that decay, bred of corruption. And there are correspondences in the moral world with this natural phenomenon. When the old Roman Empire was in its last stage of decay, when all old landmarks were being removed, and old institutions were going to pieces, then appeared for the first time these bunches of fragrant beautiful prayers, giving token of a spiritual vitality below the surface of society, a sure evidence that all was not corrupt, that the antiseptic salt of God's grace in the hearts of His elect endured still, and had not lost its savour.

¹ Isaiah xxxii. 17.

CHAPTER VI.

OF GREGORY THE GREAT AND HIS SACRAMENTARY.

Every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.—S. MATT. xiii. 52.

WHATEVER view may be taken of the character of Gregory the Great, who became Bishop of Rome A.D. 590, and into whose pontificate of thirteen or fourteen years was contracted an amount of activity, political, ecclesiastical, and intellectual, enough for the lifetime of two or three ordinary men, the English Church cannot help regarding his memory with reverence. The Council of Cloveshoo¹ held by Cuthbert, Archbishop of Canterbury, in this country, under the presidency of Ethelbald, king of Mercia, decrees in its seventeenth canon that "the festival of the blessed Pope Gregory (March 12), and of St. Augustine, archbishop and confessor (May 26), who, sent to the nation of the Angles by the aforesaid pope our father Gregory, first brought hither the knowledge [of God imparted] by faith, the sacrament of baptism,

¹ Dean Hook, in summarising the acts of the Council of Cloveshoo, says, "The calendar was reformed on the Roman model, and to it were added festivals in honour of Gregory and Augustine, as in our present Prayer-books."—"Lives of Archbishops of Canterbury," vol. i. chap. v. p. 226. [London, 1861.] Cloveshoo is supposed to be Cliffe, in Kent. The Council was held in 747 A.D.

and the tidings of the heavenly country, should be venerated and honoured by all, as is meet, and that the name of Augustine should be recited on those days in the Litany immediately after the invocation of St. Gregory.”¹ The only trace of this canon which the Reformed English Church retains is in its Kalendar, where both St. Gregory’s and St. Augustine’s day appear as black letter festivals. Both the missionary, and he who sent him, died in the same year (604), the first Archbishop of Canterbury entering into his rest two months and fourteen days after the first and greatest of the Gregories. The story is well known ;² yet it is impossible, in this connexion, to avoid telling once again the oft-told tale, how Gregory, when a mere monk of the monastery of St. Andrew, at Rome, which he himself had founded, but over which he was not the first to preside (somewhat resembling in this our own

¹ Septimo decimo constitutum est præcepto : ut dies natalitius beati papæ Gregorii, et dies quoque depositionis, qui est 7 kal. Junii, sancti Augustini archiepiscopi atque confessoris, qui genti Anglorum missus a præfato papa, et patre nostro Gregorio, scientiam fidei, baptismi sacramentum, et cœlestis patriæ notitiam primus attulit, ab omnibus, sicut decet, honorifice venerentur. Ita ut uterque dies ab ecclesiasticis et monasterialibus feriatuſ habeatur, nomenque ejusdem beati patris et doctoris nostri Augustini, in litanîæ decantatione, post sancti Gregorii invocationem semper dicatur. — “Concilia Magnæ Britannîæ et Hiberniæ, a Davide Wilkins, S.T.P. collecta,” vol. i. p. 97. [Londini, 1737.]

² Bede’s is one of the earliest versions of it. It will be found in Book II. chap. i. of Dr. Giles’s “Translation of Bede’s Ecclesiastical History,” pp. 67, 68 [London, 1859]. In the opening of this chapter (which is headed, *On the death of the blessed Pope Gregory, A.D. 605*) Bede says : “We may and ought rightly to call him our apostle ; because, whereas he bore the pontifical power over all the world, and was placed over the churches already reduced to the faith of truth, he made our nation, till then given up to idols, the church of Christ, so that we may be allowed thus to attribute to him the character of an apostle ; for though he is not an apostle to others, yet he is so to us ; for we are the seal of his apostleship in our Lord.”

Edward Irving, who having himself, if one may say so, refounded the Apostolate, set the apostles over his own head, and took his instructions from them), caught sight of two fair and handsome Yorkshire boys exposed for sale in the Roman slave market, and was so much interested by their looks as to make inquiries about their country. 'They have angel faces,' said he, when told they were Angles (the angels are always depicted fair, and with golden lustrous hair; and the contrast of the fair-haired Saxons with the dark type of beauty prevalent in southern Europe would specially strike an Italian); "companions for angels they ought to be; what province are they from?" When told they were from the Deiri, he continued in the same strain of playing upon words, *de irâ* being the Latin for "from wrath." "Truly they come here," said he, "to be delivered by Jesus from the wrath to come—brands to be snatched out of the burning. But how is the king of their province called?" When he was told that the king's name was Ællah, "Alleluia," said he, "the praise of the Creator must be sung in that province." Those who object to such playing upon words¹ in matters of serious concern will do well to reflect that St. Paul, speaking by inspiration of God, exposes himself to a similar censure

¹ Surely Alban Butler notices too seriously the censure of Gregory's play upon words as "a piece of low punning." It is not necessary to resort to the example of "St. Austin," or of "Lord Chancellor Bacon," to justify plays upon words in matters of the most serious moment. Scriptural instances of such playing upon names are given in the text; and what are we to say about "Thou art Peter" (Πέτρος), "and upon this rock" (ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρῃ) "I will build my Church"? See Butler's "Life of St. Gregory the Great, Pope," C. (March 12), vol. iii. pp. 124, 125, note (a). [Edinburgh, 1798.] Dean Hook, too, is inclined to take an apologetic tone, calling Gregory "an incorrigible punster," and referring us to Stanley's "Memorials of Canterbury" for other puns of his.—"Lives of Archbishops of Canterbury," vol. i. p. 48, note *.

when he plays upon the name Onesimus, which means *profitable*; "I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds; which in time past was to thee *unprofitable*, but now *profitable* to thee and to me;"¹ and that the names Abram and Sarai were made by the slightest modifications to express great mysteries respecting the persons who bore them, God Himself making these modifications.² But this by the way.—A man whose mind is imbued with Christian truth, is reminded of it by everything which he meets in his walk, and Gregory, in passing through the slave market at Rome, had perhaps the thought of a worse bondage suggested to him. At all events, it is he who has taught us to implore deliverance from that worse bondage in one of our occasional Collects, used less often than it ought to be, in which we ask that, "though we be *tied and bound with the chain of our sins*, yet the pitifulness of God's great mercy may loose us; for the honour of Jesus Christ, our Mediator and Advocate."³ And Gregory's pitifulness for the fairhaired foreigners did not, as many religious emotions do, evaporate with the occasion which called it forth. He was in grim earnest on the subject of a mission to England. He started himself on the enterprise, and had made a march of three days, when he was recalled by the pope, acting on the instigation of the people, who could not bear to lose him. When he himself became pope, he acted on the impulse which he had received when a monk in the slave market of Rome, and sent Augustine, the prior of the monastery which he had founded, and under him several monks and choristers, to

¹ Philem. 10, 11.

² See Gen. xvii. 5, 15.

³ "A Prayer that may be said after any of the former;" to be found in the Book of Common Prayer under the head "Prayers and Thanksgivings upon several Occasions."

carry the gospel to the kingdoms of the Saxon Heptarchy. The little party was dismayed, when they reached France, by the accounts they received of the barbarousness of the English, and the dangers and hardships incident to their undertaking. Like John Mark, in the Acts, they declined the great enterprise, as soon as they began to realise its difficulties, and sent back their prior to ask Gregory's leave to return. Gregory, however, would not give them leave. He said he only wished he could go with them; and besought them not to be like the man in the Gospels, who, from not having counted the cost in the first instance, "began to build, but was not able to finish." The missionaries took heart from what he said to Augustine, overruled difficulties with a high hand, and in the year 596 effected a landing on the Isle of Thanet. Being invited to an interview with Ethelbert, king of Kent, whose queen was already a Christian, they came into his presence singing the Litany, and spoke to him the word of life.—As we are speaking of Gregory in connexion with England, it should be added that one of the many literary works by which Alfred the Great (perhaps more justly entitled to be called great than any other king who ever sat on a throne) sought to imbue his subjects with true religion and useful learning, was a translation of Gregory's treatise of Pastoral Rule. If written in these times, the book would probably have been entitled, "Of the Pastoral Care or Charge;" but the government of the flock in those days entered quite as much into the conception of the duty of a pastor, as the watching over them. The work is divided into four books, the third and longest of which instructs preachers and teachers how to address themselves to various classes of characters. Gregory regarded preaching as the "principal and most indispensable function of a pastor" (as it is called by Thomas Aquinas);

and of the cure of souls he used to say (after his namesake, Gregory of Nazianzus) that it was "the science of sciences, and the art of arts."¹ That Gregory had his faults both of character and conduct will not be denied by those who know anything of his history. He was grievously superstitious as to relics, absurdly credulous as to miracles, and of a towering ambition, although he severely censured that sin in other bishops. But his superstitions and credulities were more or less the faults of his age; and his ambition was one of those forms in which the force of his character showed itself, which also showed itself in forms honourable to himself, and most beneficial to his countrymen. If it was he who laid the foundation of the temporal power of the Popes, this was what he could hardly have helped doing; for the seat of empire being at Constantinople, and the exarchs of Ravenna, who governed Italy in the interests of the Eastern emperors, being feeble and timid, the government of Rome was in fact thrown into the hands of the bishop, and Gregory did signal service to his countrymen, when the Lombard Agilulph appeared at the gates of Rome, and retired in consequence of the vigorous action which the bishop took. He broke off the homily on Ezekiel, which he was preaching, with an exclamation from his favourite book of Job; "My harp is turned to mourning, and my organ into the voice of them that weep,"² and, descending from the pulpit, addressed himself to the political crisis then imminent with all the talent of a diplomatist and a general.

Gregory has left his mark deep upon Church music, and on the English Book of Common Prayer. Who has not heard of Gregorian chants, which, whatever may be

¹ These particulars are taken from Alban Butler's "Life of Gregory," pp. 130, 131.

² Job xxx. 31.

thought of their ruggedness and severity, were yet, it would appear, less rugged and severe, and offered more variety, than those which St. Ambrose had imported into Italy? Feeling the service of song in the house of the Lord to be a great means of edification, he established a choristers' school at Rome, in which he gave instructions himself, and in which, for three hundred years after him, were preserved the Anthem Book, or *Antiphonarium*, which he compiled, and—significant index of the discipline essential to a well-conducted choir—the whip with which he often threatened, and sometimes chastised, his choir boys.

To Gregory's Sacramentary Canon Bright traces twenty-seven and a half of our present Communion Collects.¹ One of them, which I select, not as the finest, but as showing the nature of his undertaking, is the Collect for Easter Day. His object was to abridge, condense, improve, and re-arrange the earlier Sacramentaries of Leo and Gelasius; in short, to do for them very much what Cranmer and our Reformers did for the old Latin Offices generally. In giving effect to this plan, he took Gelasius's beginning of the Easter Day Collect, and added to it a new ending of his own, thus, like the instructed scribe, bring-

¹ These are the Collects for St. Stephen's Day, St. John Evangelist's Day, the Epiphany, the First, Second, Third, Fourth, and Fifth Sundays after the Epiphany, Septuagesima, Sexagesima, the Second, Third, Fourth, and Fifth Sundays in Lent, the first for Good Friday, the second half of that for Easter Day, the Ascension, Whitsun Day, the Third, Fourth, Seventeenth, Twenty-second, Twenty-third, Twenty-fourth, and Twenty-fifth Sundays after Trinity, the Purification, the Annunciation, Michaelmas Day,—as well as, "O God, whose nature and property," "Prevent us, O Lord," the final prayer of the Litany, the second prayer in the Baptismal Office, and the first sentence of the first prayer in the Burial Service,—twenty-seven and a half Collects in the strict sense of the word, having Epistles and Gospels connected with them, and used at the Communion. Bright's "Ancient Collects," pp. 218-222.

ing forth out of his treasure things new and old;¹ “Almighty God, who through thine only-begotten Son Jesus Christ hast overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life;”—so far the Collect is Gelasius’s, but what follows is Gregory’s, and a most beautiful intimation it is of the doctrine of grace, as against the Pelagian heretics: “We humbly beseech thee, that, as by thy special grace preventing us thou dost put into our minds good desires, so by thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect.” Does any one ask where is the coherency between the earlier part of the Collect and its direct petition? A very little thought serves to show what the answer is. The Lord Jesus, by His Resurrection and Ascension, hath “opened unto us the gate of everlasting life”—hath set it open before us with the words; “Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it.”² By His grace He kindles in our minds the desire to enter in at this strait gate, and also strengthens our wills to act upon the desire, and thus to “bring it to good effect,”—the effect of holiness here, and of eternal blessedness hereafter.

¹ See St. Matt. xiii. 52.

² Rev. iii. 8.

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE USE OF SARUM, AND OF ST. OSMUND, ITS COMPILER.

Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon.—DANIEL ii. 48.

THOSE of our Collects, which are translated from the old Latin Offices, may for the most part be traced back to one of the three great Sacramentaries. The Sacramentaries are successive editions (perhaps I should rather call them revisions) of the Sacrament-Book of the old Roman Church—meaning by Sacrament-Book the book which contained the prayers and rites used by the Church, not only in the administration of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, but also in those other ordinances to which the Church of Rome extends the name of Sacraments. These editions were made by the Roman Bishops, Leo, Gelasius, and Gregory, during the century and a half which elapsed between A.D. 450 and A.D. 600, and which was marked by the downfall of the Western Roman Empire. But, although our translated Collects come to us *from* these Sacramentaries (and perhaps from a much earlier period still, the editors of the Sacramentaries having been not so much authors as compilers and arrangers of what they found already in use), they do not come *through* the Sacramentaries. The work which our Reformers found

them in, and took them from, was the Missal or Mass Book of the Church of Sarum. And this Mass Book was part of the "Use of Sarum"—that is, of the Church Custom-Book, which was compiled by Osmund, Bishop of Sarum, and which was more generally adopted than any of the other English "Uses,"¹ particularly in the southern parts of the kingdom.

It will be well to say a word about this famous "Use," the sources from which, the occasion on which, and the person by whom, it was compiled. The monk Augustine, who was sent into this country, A.D. 597, by Pope Gregory the Great, brought with him the Liturgy of the Roman Church. But, in passing through France on his way to England, he had found another liturgy, the Gallican, a liturgy of Eastern extraction, as the Roman was of Western. This Gallican liturgy, too, confronted him as soon as he arrived on these shores; for Queen Bertha, wife of Ethelbert, King of Kent, had come over from France, and brought with her as her chaplain Luidhard, Bishop of Senlis, who doubtless would introduce those rites to which he had been accustomed in his own country. Perplexed by the differences between the two liturgies, Augustine consulted Gregory as to which he should adopt

¹ The idea of a *national* uniformity of Church customs was of a much later growth than the period we are now speaking of. Every bishop was considered to have, within certain limits, the power of regulating the ceremonial and the prayers which should be used in his own diocese. There would be indeed one and the same platform of public devotion for every diocese; but this one platform did not exclude different usages, which varied at the discretion of the bishop; and the collection of these usages was called a "Use." Of these "Uses" we read in the treatise prefixed to our Prayer Book "Concerning the Service of the Church." Five of them are enumerated (Salisbury, Hereford, Bangor, York, and Lincoln); and it is ruled that for the future uniformity "in saying and singing" shall be established "in Churches within this Realm," and that "now from henceforth all the whole Realm shall have but one Use."

in England. Gregory gave him a very liberal-minded and judicious answer, bidding him adopt, not necessarily the Roman customs, but whatever approved themselves most to his judgment, and telling him that "things are not to be loved for the places in which they are found, but places for the things which are found in them." We must suppose that he acted upon this good advice, and that, while he would have a natural partiality for the modes of celebrating Divine Service to which he had been inured from his youth, he did not think it necessary to discard all the old Gallican forms which had existed in the country before the period of his mission. And thus would be formed a composite ritual in England, with some Gallican and some Roman elements in it. With the Norman invasion in A.D. 1066 the Gallican Liturgy was again imported into the country, only with some modern alterations and recent usages, which had crept in during the four centuries and a half since Augustine's death. And there soon came about a collision between these modern usages and those practised by the Saxons, which had been formed originally under the instructions given by Gregory the Great to Augustine, and had taken gradually a set shape of their own. One of these collisions is said to have been the occasion of compiling the "Use of Sarum." Thurstan, a Norman monk of Caen, who had come over with the Conqueror, was appointed by him Abbot of Glastonbury in the year 1083. The new abbot found at Glastonbury the Gregorian mode of chanting, which had established itself in England from the sixth century. Thurstan preferred a modern style of chanting, recently introduced in Normandy by William of Fécamp. With the arrogance of a man who felt himself to belong to the conquering race, while at the same

time the monks of his own house owed him canonical obedience, he set at nought the prepossessions of his Chapter, and thrust the Fécamp mode of chanting upon them by his own authority. The monks sturdily declining to use it, the abbot introduced an armed force of Normans into the Chapter House, and there was scandalous tumult and massacre in the Abbey Church. The issue of this fray was that the king, seeing that the temper of the monks had made Glastonbury a place too hot to hold Thurstan, was obliged to recall and send him back to Normandy. The incident scandalized, as well it might, the more devout and learned ecclesiastics of the court. One of these was Osmund, the Conqueror's second Lord Chancellor. He had been Count of Séez in Normandy, had fought at Hastings, and was, in requital of his services, created Earl of Dorset, and entrusted with the great seal. In 1078 he was appointed Bishop of Salisbury, the see which Herman, his predecessor, had recently translated from Wilton to Old Sarum. Being a man of learning, and versed also in Church song, he conceived the idea of settling the Ritual of the English Church, and thus of putting an end to that diversity of practice, which had given rise to such profane and disastrous contentions. He endeavoured to ascertain the true text of the various Rubrics, and to rule in one way points which hitherto had been left to the discretion of the minister. The result of his labour was the "Use of the illustrious and renowned Church of Sarum," first adopted for the diocese of Sarum in 1085, and used in the new cathedral of Old Sarum in 1087, but which eventually "became and continued for four centuries and a half the principal devotional rule of the Church of England."¹ In

¹ Blunt's "Annotated Book of Common Prayer."

several of its features it differs materially from the Roman Liturgy, one of these being the Collect for Purity, which stands at the beginning of our Communion Office, and strikes the first note of that noble service, but which is not found, at least in that connexion, in the Roman rite.

In order to form a fair estimate of Osmund's goodness and greatness, we must consider his surroundings, and the state of society upon which he was thrown. He had been a soldier, and a brave one, and had won the earldom of Dorset by his gallant behaviour in the field under the banner of the Norman duke. The military captains of those days were for the most part armed plunderers, who recognised no right save that which was given by the sword, and filled their castles with spoil gathered by the oppression of the weak; but Osmund was a soldier of high chivalry, one of those who thought that the only legitimate use of arms was to defend and establish the right. Many of the Norman nobles were stained with those vices which it is a shame even to speak of; but Osmund, amidst the prevailing immorality, kept himself pure. All classes, with the exception of the clergy, were grossly ignorant; but Osmund, notwithstanding the hindrances which the life of a soldier and a courtier had thrown in his way, had made himself a man of learning, and even of accomplishments. He had the greatest reverence for books, those repositories of wisdom, transcribing and binding them with his own hands, and providing his Cathedral Church at Old Sarum with a magnificent library. A trace of his musical abilities, and his devotion to Church song, still lingers among us in the fact that the Bishop of Salisbury is *ex officio* Precentor of the Province of Canterbury. Finally, though he was a courtier, and a nobleman of high degree, he seems to have escaped the manifold snares attaching

to those positions, being proof against luxury, insincerity, and hollow flattery of princes. Once indeed, at Rockingham, in the year 1095, he took the part of William Rufus against Anselm ; but soon afterwards, discovering that right and truth were on the Archbishop's side, Osmund sought his absolution, and joined him in his opposition to the greed and encroachments of the king. A man pure in time of licence, learned in time of ignorance, just in time of social disorder, devout in time of impiety and profaneness, must have been a burning and shining light in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. Such a light can only be kindled, and, when kindled, only kept burning, by Divine grace. Daniel, the self-denying and gifted Hebrew youth, "made ruler over the whole province of Babylon" by Nebuchadnezzar, made first president of the kingdom by Darius,¹ and yet true to his God against his king, when the king issued an unrighteous decree ;² Daniel, who "in all matters of wisdom and understanding" was "found ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers,"³ and who, though himself endowed with prophetic insight, yet "understood by books" the counsels of God in regard to the future ;⁴ the Ethiopian nobleman in the Acts, who had charge of all Queen Candace's treasure, and yet sought for the treasures of the heavenly exchequer by going up to Jerusalem to worship, and studying Isaiah the prophet as he returned ;⁵ the saints in Cæsar's household (the Cæsar being Nero) who sent their greetings to the Philippian Christians by the pen of St. Paul ;⁶—these are the Scriptural types of such men as Osmund, and it is only by the grace of God that such

¹ See Dan. vi. 2.

³ See Dan. i. 20.

⁵ See Acts viii. 27, 28.

² See Dan. vi. 9, 10.

⁴ See Dan. ix. 2.

⁶ See Phil. iv. 22.

men were what they were. Never has the night of ignorance and superstition been so dark in the Church, either under the Old or New Dispensation, that God has not had His glow-worms to illuminate the darkness. Never has vice been so rampant but that some voice has been raised to protest against and reprove it in God's name—"his holy prophets have been since the world began."¹ Never have the foundations of all social order been so subverted, that there have been no nurseries of piety and homes of devotion, where God has been served with prayer, and meditation, and study of His word. And if now, under totally different social and political conditions, Religion exhibits itself in shapes of another kind, and is certainly more widely spread over the surface of society, that is no reason for undervaluing, much less disparaging, either the institutions or the men who represented it in uncivilised times, and, after exhibiting to their own generation its heroic self-denial and brave defiance of the world, have bequeathed to us its records, its ordinances, and its worship, illustrated by their own example.

¹ St. Luke i. 70.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON THE COLLECTS OF ARCHBISHOP CRANMER.

Thy words were found, and I did eat them.—JER. xv. 16.

OUR Reformers made an original contribution to the stock of old Collects which they found in the Missal of Sarum. They were not only translators and compilers, but composers also. Five of the *Sunday* Collects came from their pen; and these five are certainly not the least grand and edifying of the whole collection—the two first in Advent, the two first after Easter, and that for Quinquagesima Sunday. Nearly three times as large was their contribution to the Saints' Day Collects. For here, in the old Offices, were to be encountered more of the unscriptural superstitions, which had utterly to be pruned away in order to fit the Prayer Book for the use of the Reformed Church. The gangrene of invocation of saints, and of confidence in their prayers and merits, had, as was to be expected, eaten much deeper into these than into the Sunday Collects. And it is observable how the Collect for All Saints' Day, which is one of those composed by the Reformers, and which acts as a sort of keystone, holding together the whole group of Saints' Day Collects, sketches briefly, but very exhaustively, the whole doctrine of the regard in which saints are to be held. We are to think of those who have fallen asleep in Jesus as

being still unseen members of that Church, which has spread itself visibly over the face of the earth ; as having communion and fellowship with the same Father, through the same Saviour, and by the same Spirit as ourselves, according to the teaching of that glorious passage to the Hebrews ; “ Ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God . . . to the general assembly and Church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and *to the spirits of just men made perfect.*”¹ This, then, is the doctrine of the earlier part of the Collect ; “ O Almighty God, who hast knit together thine elect in one communion and fellowship, in the mystical body of thy Son Christ our Lord.”—And then the duty of imitating saints, of copying them in those features of character in which they copied the great Exemplar, according to that word of St. Paul, “ Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ ;”² “ That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises,”³—this comes out in the latter part ; “ Grant us grace so to follow thy blessed Saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those unspeakable joys, which thou hast prepared for them that unfeignedly love thee.” What else can be said respecting the veneration, in which saints are to be held, but these two things—that we are to hold communion with them, not directly, by invocations addressed to them, but indirectly, through the communion which *they* always *do*, and *we* always *may*, hold with God in Christ ; and that we should in our lives follow them, as they followed Christ ? For this significant All Saints’ Collect, as well as for those for Christmas Day, and twelve of the minor Saints’ days, our Prayer

¹ Heb. xii. 22, 23.

² 1 Cor. xi. 1.

³ Heb. vi. 12.

Book is indebted to our Reformers; and no small debt it is.

As to the matter of them, these Collects are always pertinent to the occasion, and always Scriptural—more explicitly, though not more really so, than the old Latin prayers. As to the expression, they reproduce most happily the antitheses and neatly-balanced clauses which are found in the Sacramentaries; and as to the language, the English is of the raciest and best order. It is English, as Lord Macaulay has remarked, in the vigour of its earliest youth,¹ just as our language was rising into its prime; whereas the Latin of the old Office Books was Latin in its latest stage of decrepitude.

It cannot be said for certain to which of the Reformers we are indebted for any particular Collect. The Act of Parliament, which gave the first draught of the Prayer Book its civil sanction, names no one on the Commission except Archbishop Cranmer, the other Commissioners being called generally “most learned and discreet bishops, and other learned men of the realm.” They are generally stated to have been twelve in number, besides the Primate,—six Bishops and six divines.² Ridley, then

¹ “The technical phraseology of Christianity did not become a part of the Latin language till that language had passed the age of maturity and was sinking into barbarism. But the technical phraseology of Christianity was found in the Anglo-Saxon and in the Norman French, long before the union of those two dialects had produced a third dialect superior to either. The Latin of the Roman Catholic services, therefore, is Latin in the last stage of decay. The English of our services is English in all the vigour and suppleness of early youth.” Macaulay’s “History of England,” vol. iii. p. 475. [London, 1855.]

² Dean Hook tells us—“The committee of revision appointed in the reign of Henry VIII. was considerably enlarged in the following reign, and, as we have before remarked, acted now under a royal commission.” Of the upper house there were the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Cranmer; the Bishop of Ely, Dr. Goodrich, afterwards Lord Chancellor; the Bishop

Bishop of Rochester, afterwards translated to London, was certainly one of them. But the Archbishop of Canterbury, partly from his position, partly from the circumstance of his having initiated the movement for the revision of the Offices, would no doubt bear the chief part in the translation of, and additions to, the new Service Book, and we can hardly err in supposing that the new Collects reflect and exhibit his mind.

Everybody knows that the character of Cranmer was defaced by very foul blots. Yet these blots, even when we look them full in the face, and make no attempt to extenuate them, ought not to prevent our regarding him as a man of genuine Christian principle, which shone out

of Lincoln, Dr. Holbeach; the Bishop of Chichester, Dr. Day; the Bishop of Hereford, Dr. Skip; the Bishop of Westminster, Dr. Thirlby; the Bishop of Rochester, afterwards of London, Dr. Ridley. Of the lower house the members were the Dean of St. Paul's, Dr. May; the Dean of Christ Church, afterwards Bishop of Ely, Dr. Cox; the Dean, afterwards Bishop, of Lincoln, Dr. Taylor; the Dean of Exeter, Dr. Haynes; Archdeacon, afterwards Dean, of Durham, Mr. Robertson; and Dr. Redmayne, the Master of Trinity College, Cambridge. A more judicious selection of learned and moderate men, representing all classes and all schools, could not have been made." Hook's "*Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury.*" New Series, vol. ii. pp. 270, 271. [London, 1868.]

Mr. Procter, in his "*History of the Book of Common Prayer*," p. 23 [London and Cambridge, 1864], says: "The 'notable learned men' associated with Cranmer about the 'Order of Communion' (1548), were George Day, Bishop of Chichester; Thomas Goodryke, of Ely; John Skyp, of Hereford; Henry Holbeach, of Lincoln; Nicholas Ridley, of Rochester; Thomas Thirleby of Westminster; Dr. May, Dean of St. Paul's; John Taylor, Dean (afterwards Bishop) of Lincoln; Dr. Haines, Dean of Exeter; Dr. Robertson (afterwards Dean of Durham); Dr. John Redman, Master of Trinity College, Cambridge; Dr. Richard Cox, Almoner to the King (afterwards Bishop of Ely). . . . 'All subscribed their names unto it, but Day of Chichester,' says Heylin (*Hist. Ref.*, 2 Ed. VI. § 20), from the register-book of the parish of Petworth. But the bishops of Westminster and Hereford joined with him in protesting against the Act of Uniformity, when the bill was brought before the House of Lords; and probably Robertson and Redman liked it as little. Strype, *Eccl.*

brightly in his end, much less as one who was God's instrument for conferring many and high blessings on our Church, and for directing the English Reformation in a safe and primitive channel. When we take an impartial view of his history, his most serious and least excusable faults will be found to be those connected with the royal divorces, his detestable truckling to the lust of Henry VIII., and the making both his conscience and his theology accommodate themselves to the licentious and cruel whims of that tyrant. As to the six recantations signed by the archbishop in order to save his life, of which so much is made by his detractors, it should be remembered that the moral courage, which gave way under the pressure of imprisonment and imminent death, had stood quite firm on an earlier occasion, and rallied again at the end. Nothing is more certain than that, when Mary came to the throne, and began to rehabilitate the superstitions which had been swept away, Cranmer might have found safety in flight, but did not. He recommended others to leave the country, but would not accept their recommendation to do so himself. "It would be in no ways fitting for him," he said, "to go away, considering the post in which he was ; and to show that he was not afraid to own all the changes that were by his means made in religion in the last reign."¹ And imme-

Mem., Ed. VI., bk. 1, chap. 11. The persons actually engaged in the work were probably Cranmer, Ridley, Goodrich, Holbeach, May, Taylor, Haynes, and Cox. Browne, *Exp. of the Thirty-nine Articles*, Introduction, p. 5, *note*." The authority given by Bishop Harold Browne for supposing only eight (out of the thirteen) to be "parties actually engaged," is that of Soames. And he adds this quotation from that author: "If it be true that Dr. Redmayn did not cordially approve the new Liturgy, that circumstance is to be regretted, for the age could boast of few men more erudite and honest." Vol. iii. p. 256.

¹ Froude's "History of England," vol. vi. p. 80 [London, 1860]. The words of the Archbishop are quoted from Strype's "Cranmer."

diately after this, when the mass was being everywhere restored, he put himself forward in a letter, which was very widely circulated, as ready to defend against all opponents the Reformed Communion Service. True, his courage gave way when severer pressure was put upon him. Cowed and crushed in his boyhood by the severity of a harsh schoolmaster, he had never been a man of strong or independent mind. He was of a sensitive organization, and of an amiable but yielding character, liable to be overborne physically by the prospect of bodily suffering, and to be morally overborne by the consciousness that numbers and authorities of the day were arrayed against his opinions. But the principle, which had led him to refuse to fly, rallied grandly at the last. Who shall refuse admiration to that act of thrusting into the flames first the right hand which had signed those recreant recantations? True, the Queen would not have saved his life, whatever he might have done; he had no option but the stake; but is there no such thing as martyrdom in will though not in deed? The three Hebrew youths were martyrs in will, though not in deed, when they walked scathless in the midst of Nebuchadnezzar's furnace; and there is every evidence, which the subject admits of, that the supreme moment, when it arrived to Cranmer, drew out the energies of his will, which had been overpowered by weary hours of uncertainty and anticipation, and that at the last, if he might have saved himself by recanting, he would not have done so.

For the rest, how imbued with Christian principle was that address of his before his execution, in which he retracted his recantations! One of his dying exhortations was that "you live all together like brethren and sisters; for this you may be sure, that whosoever hateth his

brother or sister, and goeth about maliciously to hinder or hurt him, surely, and without all doubt, God is not with that man, although he think himself never so much in God's favour."¹ What an illustration is afforded by this dying counsel of the good archbishop, of the doctrine of one of his own Collects; "O Lord, who hast taught us that all our doings without charity are nothing worth; Send thy Holy Ghost, and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of charity, the very bond of peace and of all virtues, without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before thee: Grant this for thine only Son Jesus Christ's sake."—And again, his choice of the subject of the Holy Scriptures for the lectures which he was to give at Cambridge, when raised to the degree of Doctor of Divinity;² his great desire, at a later period, to circulate the Scriptures in English among the people;³ and his procuring a royal injunction to be issued to the clergy that every one of them "should provide a book of the whole Bible . . . and lay it in the choir" [of their churches] "for every man that would look and read therein; and should dis-

¹ Froude's "History of England," vol. vi. p. 425. His four last exhortations were "to eschew worldliness; to obey the king and queen; to live together in brotherly love; and, if rich, to abound in alms-deeds."—See also Hook's "Archbishops of Canterbury," New Series, vol. ii. p. 414 [London, 1868].

² The circumstance is noticed by Dean Hook, "Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury," New Series, vol. i. pp. 430, 432, 434 [London, 1868].

³ "When he . . . consented to become Archbishop of Canterbury, he was resolute in two points only; but those were important points. He was determined to emancipate the Church of England from all papal usurpation, and, at the same time, to secure for the people an authorised version of Scripture, to be freely circulated—to be placed in the hands of all who could read. Let men have the Bible, and the Church would reform itself."—Hook's "Archbishops of Canterbury," New Series, vol. ii. p. 136.

courage no man from reading any part of the Bible . . . but rather comfort, exhort, and admonish every man to read it as the very Word of God, and the spiritual food of man's soul,"¹—what an interest is given by these facts to another of Cranmer's Collects,—that on the right use of Holy Scripture,—for the truths of which the fresh bracing air of the Reformation had created a keen appetite among the people, an appetite which might be justly described in the language of the prophet, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them."² "Blessed Lord, who hast caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning; Grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience, and comfort of thy holy Word, we may embrace, and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ."

¹ Hook's "Archbishops of Canterbury," New Series, vol. ii. p. 140.

² Jer. xv. 16.

CHAPTER IX.

OF THE RESTORATION COLLECTS, AND OF JOHN COSIN, PRINCE-BISHOP OF DURHAM.

And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.—
ACTS vii. 60.

FOUR of the Collects at present used in our Communion Office made their first appearance in connexion with, and immediately after, the Savoy Conference, which was held in 1661. These four, which we may call the Restoration Collects, are the Collects for the Third Sunday in Advent, for St. Stephen's Day,¹ for the Sixth Sunday after Epiphany, and for Easter Even. They are all struck from one die; they all supply real gaps in the series of Collects, as the Reformers left them; and they are all, not only sound and Scriptural, but fine compositions. Yet we may trace in them some slight declension (very faint, and only just beginning to peep out) from the standard of Cranmer's Collects, though, in respect of their explicit references to Holy Scripture, they are marked by a close resemblance to his. We lose sight of the balanced clauses and antitheses so characteristic of the old Sacramentaries, and

¹ So many new features were added by the revisers to the Collect for St. Stephen's Day, that we may call it their composition. But the nucleus round which it all gathers is found in the Missal of Sarum. (See more in the Exposition of this Collect.)

which Cranmer had happily reproduced.—Then again we note in them the appearance of two words to express one and the same idea,—a blemish in style,—as in the Third in Advent; “Grant that the ministers and stewards of thy mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready thy way.” What is preparing but making ready? There is no real contribution to the thought in the second word.—Then, generally, while all the Collects are written (and most properly) in rhythmical English which satisfies the ear, the rhythm is in the generality of them stern and chastened; but here, in these Restoration Collects, there is ever so slight a tendency to pomposity and rhetorical artifice, such a phraseology as would be more suited to a preaching of the prayers than a praying of them.—Finally, am I hypercritical in discerning here a slight tendency to make the prayers expositions of Scripture—that is, to make them sermons? Expositions of Scripture are surely out of place in prayers, which are direct addresses to God, and in which the mind of the petitioner should set God as much as possible, and man as little as possible, before it. The Collect for St. Stephen’s Day ends thus; “O blessed Jesus, who standest at the right hand of God to succour all those that suffer for thee, our only Mediator and Advocate.” Now it is a very beautiful and edifying explanation of our Lord’s having appeared to St. Stephen in a standing posture, that it was designed to indicate His readiness to help all who suffer in His cause; but what is the use of alleging such an explanation in an invocation addressed directly to the Lord Himself? That we are not mistaken in finding in these Restoration Collects traces of a degeneracy of style, the now discarded State Services for the thirtieth of January and the twenty-ninth of May furnish evidence.

These Services, composed in that outburst of political animosity which attended the Restoration of the Church and Monarchy, bear on their forefront the stamp of inferiority. They show what the devotional style of the day was, when it was left to develop itself without restraint; and from these indications of it we may be thankful that so very small a proportion of the real Prayer Book was composed at that period, and that the taint which the Collects have taken from it is scarcely perceptible except to the eye of a very minute criticism. Stiltiness, pompous language, rhetorical amplification and diffuseness, characterize these Services everywhere; the framers of them seem to have lost entirely the old antithesis of well-balanced clauses, and to have attempted to give effect to the prayers of the Church by a weak agglomeration of epithets and synonyms.¹ These are just the features of style which should *not* characterize our prayers.—For the rest, the Restoration Collects have their excellences and strong points. Each of them is built upon a single clear and definite idea, which is worked out very satisfactorily. In two of them, the Third in Advent and that for St. Stephen's Day,² are found direct addresses to God the Son, which,

¹ Thus, "cruel and bloody men;" "constant meek suffering of all barbarous indignities;" "violent and bloodthirsty men;" "cruel men, sons of Belial;" "great and long provocations of our sins;" "violent outrages of wicked men;" "an eminent measure of exemplary patience;" "neither the greatest of kings, nor the best of men, are secure;" "neither the splendour of anything that is great, nor the conceit of anything that is good in us;" "his own just and undoubted Rights;" "the publick and free profession of thy true Religion and Worship;" "all loyal and dutiful allegiance;" "to crown her with immortality and glory;" "miraculous and gracious deliverances;" "righteous and religious Kings and States, professing thy holy and eternal truth," etc. etc. etc.

² It is necessary to suppose that the petition of the St. Stephen's Collect (as well as the invocation at the close of it) is addressed to God the Son. (See this discussed in the exposition of the Collect.)

though unusual in Collects said at the Communion, is a valuable feature, as distinctly recognising the Divinity of our Blessed Lord, and, in the case of the St. Stephen's Collect, very happily keeping alive the memory of the martyr's dying prayer; while the Sixth after the Epiphany has in its close a direct invocation of the Holy Ghost, with a direct adoration of all the three Sacred Persons, which surely is unusually solemn and edifying; "where with thee, O Father, and thee, O Holy Ghost, he liveth and reigneth, ever one God, world without end."

Who composed these Collects? All that history tells us is that they were drawn up by a committee of eight bishops, at the head of which was John Cosin, Prince-Bishop of Durham, who, as a prince-palatine, would take precedence of the others.¹ He therefore is mainly responsible for the Restoration Collects, even if he did not actually draught them himself, as it is probable he did. But why did not the Archbishop of Canterbury stand at the head of the Commission? In the natural course of things he would have done so; but Juxon was now so old (seventy-eight) as to be past work. In crowning King Charles the Second he was obliged to leave to the Bishop of London the presentation of the king to the people, which involves walking round the platform of the throne, and raising the voice so as to make a multitude hear. So the Prince-Bishop of Durham, a divine who, some thirty-three years ago, had published a very valuable book of Private

¹ "The second session of this royalist Parliament began November 20th (1661), and Convocation reassembled on the following day, when the king's letters were read, directing the revision of the Common-Prayer, and a committee of bishops was appointed for the purpose, viz. — Cosin, Bishop of Durham, Wren of Ely, Skinner of Oxford, Warner of Rochester, Henchman of Salisbury, Morley of Worcester, Sanderson of Lincoln, and Nicholson of Gloucester."—"Proctor's History of the Book of Common Prayer," p. 136. [London and Cambridge, 1864.]

Devotions, which hundreds of Churchmen still use as their guide in the religious exercises of the closet, was very suitably chosen as head of the Committee appointed to revise and amend the Book of Common Prayer. He was a Norwich man, son of one Giles Cosin, a wealthy citizen of that ancient city. He received his education, as has been the case with many other eminent men, at the Grammar School in the Close. And another circumstance connects him with Norwich. He had been private librarian of Overall, Bishop of Lichfield, afterwards translated to Norwich, to whom the Church of England is indebted for that part of the Catechism (later in point of date than the rest) which treats of the Sacraments. Cosin left various sums in his will to the various places with which he had been connected; and, mindful of his early patron, and of the man to whom he owed his first rise in life, he bequeathed £40 to Norwich Cathedral, to provide a tablet to the memory of Overall, with a suitable inscription, which doubtless came from his own pen. What remained of the bequest, after this tablet had been erected, was to go towards purchasing decorations for the altar. The tablet is still in one of the south bays of the presbytery, near the grave of Overall, and, though not of much value artistically, is very interesting on account of its associations. Bishop Cosin was a typical English Churchman. While protesting stoutly in his will that, however he might be calumniated, he had ever been from his youth "altogether free and averse from" the unscriptural and unprimitive corruptions of popery, and giving good proof of the truth of this by his treatises (specially those on the "History of Transubstantiation" and on the "Canon of Scripture"), he was equally opposed to the baldness and bleakness of Puritan worship, and to the sour narrowness

of Puritan doctrine. Indeed, he was the first clergyman who suffered for the fidelity of his adherence to the Church and Crown; for, in 1642, the House of Commons, on an accusation of Popish practices brought against him by an old enemy of his, sequestered all his benefices, and finding that he was implicated with others in sending the plate of the University of Cambridge to the king, ejected him from his mastership of Peterhouse and his deanery of Peterborough. The next year he joined Queen Henrietta Maria, who had taken refuge at Paris, and was commissioned by the King to act as chaplain to the Protestant members of her household, for which service he received a small stipend from the French government, with apartments in the Louvre. Here he contended controversially, and generally with happy results, against the Jesuits and Roman priests, who were constantly endeavouring to draw away the members of his little flock. These he held together, with God's assistance, not only by replying to the arguments employed to seduce them, but by providing them with those sound and truly catholic forms of "Devotions for the Hours," which he had already put forth a few years earlier, and which now stood him in good stead. Here his heart was wrung, in the year 1645, by the sad tidings of Archbishop Laud's execution, to whose school of theology he had always belonged; and, four years later, by that of the King, of whose throne he had always been a most loyal and zealous supporter. At the Restoration he emerged once more, after seventeen years of exile and poverty, and resumed his deanery at Peterborough, from which post he was transferred in quick succession, first to the deanery, and then to the bishopric and palatinate, of Durham. But thoughtful, devout, and loyal men could not emerge from these terrible troubles with their elasti-

city of mind and temper unimpaired. Cosin's writings, with the exception, of course, of his "Devotions for the Hours," evince, every now and then, the asperity of a spirit which had been tried by controversy. Begun at the close of Elizabeth's reign, and carried down to the middle of Charles the Second's, his had been a wearing, harassing life, and had left its mark upon him. Over and above the public calamities of which he had borne the brunt, his only son turned Papist, and nearly broke the father's heart. In January 1672, having attained the age of seventy-eight, he sank under an attack of dropsy, and was buried in the palace chapel at Bishop's Auckland,—a princely bishop (if ever there was one) in his munificence, and a saintly one in his devotions. When he penned the beautiful Collect for St. Stephen's Day, did his mind revert to his own experience, to the sufferings which it had been given *him* to endure for the testimony of God's truth, and to the grace which he himself needed to enable him "to love and bless" those persecutors who had fretted and galled him so much, but towards whom, we may believe, he softened as the glories of the Restoration burst upon his eye? "Grant, O Lord, that, in all our sufferings here upon earth for the testimony of thy truth, we may steadfastly look up to heaven, and by faith behold the glory that shall be revealed; and, being filled with the holy Ghost, may learn to love and bless our persecutors by the example of thy first Martyr St. Stephen, who prayed for his murderers to thee, O blessed Jesus, who standest at the right hand of God to succour all those that suffer for thee, our only Mediator and Advocate." One likes to think of him as having said this (a worthy *Nunc Dimittis*) before his end, and so having fallen asleep.

CHAPTER X.

OF THE COLLECTS, AS REPRESENTING THE GENIUS OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH.

Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.—S. MATT. xiii. 52.

THE clue to the meaning of these words of our Blessed Lord must be sought in the foregoing context. He had been speaking the parables of the good seed, the tares, the mustard seed, the leaven, the hidden treasure, the merchantman, and the draw-net; and he had given a sufficient glimpse into the spiritual significance of all of them by explaining in detail that of the tares of the field. The last parable ended, He turns to His disciples and says, "Have ye understood all these things?" They did understand (for they could hardly help doing so) thus much, that their Lord had been speaking to them spiritual truths under images borrowed from nature and human life; and, accordingly, they answer, "Yea, Lord." Whereupon our Lord closes the discourse with words which imply that in His parables, and in the insight which He had given into their meaning, was to be sought their furniture for their mission. The disciples, as persons versed, before Christ's acquaintance with them began, in the Old Testament—the Law, the Psalms, and the Prophets—might be called "scribes." By His own evangelical teaching they

had become scribes "instructed unto the kingdom of heaven." They were to be stewards of God's household the Church, and in a steward's storehouse of provisions are some articles of diet which must be consumed fresh, and others which, like wine, are better for keeping. The new things which the disciples had to set before God's household were the evangelical truths they were to teach—the doctrine of Christ and Him crucified. The old things were, in the first instance, nature and human life, under which, as our Lord showed them by His parables, so much precious spiritual truth lay hid; and, in the second place, the Scriptures of the Old Testament. In nature, in life, in the Old Testament, the Gospel was *latent*. They were to make it *patent*, to bring it out with plainness of speech, "saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come."¹ What they were to do spiritually was exactly what they had done in literal fact, when our Lord, having broken the five loaves and given thanks, had distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down. On that occasion, too, there was new store and old, new bread and new fish drawn by miraculous power out of the stock in the lad's basket. And the spiritual sustenance which the disciples had to furnish to God's household, after themselves receiving it from the Master, was simply Gospel truth, drawn out of nature, life, reason, conscience, and the old Scriptures; the lessons of which were, by the new light now shed upon them, greatly enlarged and amplified.

The Collects of the Church of England, like the truths of the Gospel, are both new and old. Not only were some of them made new at the Reformation, but the very Collects which are old then became new in a certain

¹ See Acts xxvi. 22.

sense. When the light of God's truth had fully dawned upon Cranmer and his colleagues, and when under it they looked back upon the ancient Offices, with which they had been familiar from childhood, these old forms seemed to them like seeds which had burst into blossom, or like the chrysalis which had passed into the form of a butterfly; they became instinct with new life. The Church's system of worship, however, had been not only vitiated by superstitions, but formalised and deadened, as regards any real power over the hearts of the people; it was wrapped up in a language unknown except to scholars, and had become a performance of the priest for the people instead of a Common Prayer both of priest and people. But, all this notwithstanding, our Reformers had wisdom enough to perceive that hundreds of these old prayers lived, and moved, and had their being in an element of Holy Scripture; were absolutely teeming with Scriptural truth, even where Scripture was not explicitly quoted; were indeed the very echoes which, from the beginning of the Gospel dispensation, its truths had wakened from the hearts of believers. So they threw them into our dear mother-tongue; and where the stern terseness of the Latin seemed to require a new word or clause to bring out its full force, they added a happy touch of their own, superseding altogether by original Collects those which were hopelessly corrupt, but framing even these original ones with great fidelity upon the model of the old. And it is a delight to us to know and believe that in the results of their work (forty-eight old Collects translated, nine altered, and twenty-five new made) we have not only Scriptural truth, but that truth as tinged and dyed in the experience of very learned and devout men, all of whom suffered, while many died, for the championship of it. It was out of

their own treasury that they brought forth things new and old, that is, out of the storehouse of hearts disciplined into the knowledge of the truth by God's Word and Spirit and Providence.

And the Collects in this respect are only a specimen of the entire Book of Common Prayer, which was similarly dealt with ; and the Book of Common Prayer itself is only a faithful exponent of the Church of England in its doctrine, discipline, and worship. To some—to all of her foes, and, alas ! to some of her professing friends—the Church of England seems to be a new Church, first set up at the Reformation. Doubtless, to those who looked on the outward appearance, it seemed so. The change of the Latin in the services into a tongue understood of the people, the retrenchment of many ceremonies which distracted rather than assisted the mind of the worshipper, the disappearance of images and burning tapers and all tawdry bedizenment from the Churches, and the disuse of processions except in the two Offices of Marriage and Burial,—these and the like changes tended to put upon the Reformed Church such a strange face that it was natural for those who looked no deeper than the surface to think it new altogether, a creature of the sixteenth century. But in truth it was no such thing. If, in a certain sense, it was a new thing, in another and no less important sense it was a new thing developed out of an old. Just as the Gospel had its pre-existing basis in the Law—nay, in nature, in life, in reason,—so the Reformed Church has its pre-existing basis in the Church before the Reformation. A tower cleared of the ivy which has wound its way into the crevices of the stones and dislocated them, and has flaunted down before the windows and shut out the blessed light of heaven, is the

same tower after it has been cleared of the ivy,—stands upon the same foundation, is composed of the same materials. And a Church into which corruptions have crept which peril its existence, and from which superstitions have shut out the light of Holy Scripture, is the same Church still, after it has been cleared of these corruptions and superstitions,—stands on the same “foundation of the apostles and prophets,” and is built up of the same lively stones, now joined together in unity of spirit by the doctrine of the apostles and prophets. No new ministry was introduced at the Reformation; the same ministerial succession continued after, as before, the renunciation by England of the Pope’s supremacy; and it continues still down to the present day. A new Book of Common Prayer was indeed put forth, the necessity for which arose partly from the old Office books being in a foreign tongue, partly from their having been corrupted by the introduction of elements unscriptural and unprimitive. But in far the larger part of it this new Prayer Book is ancient; very many of its prayers have been used in the English Church for at least twelve hundred years; and in compiling others the Reformers and Revisers have caught the same spirit of simplicity and piety, which breathes in the prayers of an earlier date. The Prayer Book is new, only as the Gospel was new at its first promulgation; it is new as marking a new era in religious thought and feeling, not new as having broken off relations with the system of worship and discipline previously existing.

This should be remembered and applied in seeking to gain guidance from the Prayer Book on several moot points of ceremonial and ritual. If we consider that the whole law of the English Church is to be sought between

the four corners of the Prayer Book, we must come to the conclusion that on many, and those not altogether unimportant points, as, for instance, the posture of the people at the *Tersanctus* and *Gloria in Excelsis*, we have no guidance at all. These and similar points were left without express directions, because it was assumed that what had been done in the old Offices would be done still. The Prayer Book looks back to those earlier services, and speaks their language, just as much as the Gospel looks back to, and employs the phraseology of, the Law. It is altogether essential to the right understanding of the Prayer Book, that it should be regarded as having its roots in the pre-existing system of worship; and it is on this principle that, in discussing the several Collects, I propose to lay before the reader, not only the form in which the prayer has come down to us, but the original, as it appears in the Latin Offices of the Church before the Reformation.

END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

BOOK II.

PART I.

THE CONSTANT COLLECT.

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid; Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Deus, cui omne cor patet, et omnis voluntas loquitur, et quem nullum latet secretum; purifica per infusionem Sancti Spiritus cogitationes cordis nostri; ut te perfecte diligere, et digne laudare mereamur. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

THE Collects of the Communion Office may be divided into two classes—constant and variable. Under the first head will fall the opening Collect, which is used under all circumstances. Under the head of variable Collects will fall, first, those which vary with the ecclesiastical season, with the week or the day; and, secondly, those appended to the end of the Communion Service, which are only appointed to be said when there is no actual celebration, and which vary at the “discretion of the Minister.”

The Constant Collect, to the consideration of which the present section is devoted, is perhaps the noblest of all this noble series of prayers. It is characteristically English, being found in the Missal of Sarum in two different

connexions,¹ and also at the end of the Litany in "the Use of York," but having no place, as most of our other ancient Collects have, in the Liturgy of the Church of Rome. But it is of much earlier origin than the Missal of Sarum. A manuscript Sacramentary of the Anglo-Saxon Church, given by Leofric, Bishop of Exeter, to his cathedral church before the Norman Conquest, contains it.² And it is found also in the Sacramentary of Alcuin, the contemporary and friend of Charlemagne, about the end of the eighth century.³ A Mass of the Holy Ghost, where we meet with it for the second time in the Missal of Sarum, is attributed to St. Gregory,⁴ and this Collect, therefore, may trace back to his times. Thus it comes to us recommended by its antiquity, as well as by its special connexion with the Church of this island.

As it stood in the Missal of Sarum, it was to be said secretly by the priest as he was putting on the vestments of the Mass, and, together with the hymn, "Veni Creator," and the versicle, "Send forth thy Spirit, and renew the face of the earth," formed part of his private preparation for the Holy Communion.

"Almighty God, unto whom all hearts be open." The Latin has "unto whom every heart is open." "Every" individualises the truth, which "all" gene-

¹ Once in the introductory position which it holds in our own Communion Service, and again in a Mass of the Holy Ghost [see below ⁴].

² See Palmer's "*Origines Liturgicæ*," vol. ii. pp. 23, 24 [Oxford, 1839]. Sir W. Palmer tells us that, besides the copy of this Sacramentary in the possession of the Dean and Chapter of Exeter, there is another in the Bodleian Library.

³ Palmer's "*Origines*," vol. ii. p. 24.

⁴ "It appears again in a '*Missa ad invocandum gratiam Spiritûs Sancti*,' at the end of the Sarum Missal, and this Mass is attributed by Muratori [ii. 383] to St. Gregory."—Blunt's "*Annotated Book of Common Prayer*," Part II. p. 166, *note*.

ralises. There is a vagueness about "all," which does not attach to "every." It is comfortable to be told that "Christ Jesus gave himself a ransom for *all*;"¹ but "*all*" embraces the countless myriads of the human race, among whom we ourselves might be overlooked or not thought of; and therefore it is doubly comforting to be assured that he "tasted death for *every* man."² And though "all hearts are open unto God" means the same as "every heart is open" to Him, the latter is a more searching phrase, and comes home to the conscience with greater power.—Observe that in this clause the image is drawn from the eye. "Unto whom every heart is open." The heart is compared to a cabinet, closed indeed to men, but lying open continually, with all its contents, under the survey of God. He is a "discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened *unto the eyes* of him with whom we have to do."³

"All desires known." This is too free a rendering, and the effect of it is to substitute a vague general idea for one precise and definite. The literal rendering is, "to whom every act of the will speaks," or "for whom every act of the will has a voice." The former clause represented God as piercing with penetrating *eye* into the screened cabinet of the heart. This represents Him as *hearing* every utterance of human desire and human will. "They have ears, but they hear not,"⁴ says the Psalmist of the idols of the heathen. But the true God is a hearing God; and He hears not only our words but the movements of the inner man—

"Thou knowest what 'tis my lips would vent,
"My yet unutter'd words' intent."

¹ 1 Tim. ii. 6. ² Heb. ii. 9. ³ Heb. iv. 12, 13. ⁴ Ps. cxv. 4, 6.

Nay, we are told that the appetite of hunger in an irrational creature has a voice which reaches God's ear; "He feedeth the young ravens that call upon him;"¹ "Who provideth for the raven his food? When his young ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of meat;"² "The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God."³ If God hears mere appetite, appetite which is nothing more than an animal instinct, how much more must He hear the desires of reasonable creatures; those desires which form themselves into acts of will or moral choice. And how searching and solemn is this assurance that every desire and act of the will has a voice in the ears of God. Our very longings, much more our resolves, are prayers without our expressing them. When our hearts are set upon some earthly idol, or some bauble of the world, the possession of which would be morally or spiritually mischievous, this desire is tantamount to a prayer that God would give us that thing. When Israel lusted after the fleshpots and dainties of Egypt, this was a prayer—their lust had an utterance for the ear of God; "and he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul."⁴ How strongly does this consideration impress us with the necessity of watchfulness over, and control of, the inner man—"the thoughts and intents of the heart."

"And from whom no secrets are hid." God has an all-seeing eye, says the first clause. God has an all-hearing ear, says the second. God has a perfect knowledge of the secrets of all characters, says the third. He could at any moment describe each one of us to ourselves with such perfect accuracy that we should start, and say

¹ Ps. cxlvii. 9, P. B. V.² Job xxxviii. 41.³ Ps. civ. 21.⁴ Ps. cvi. 15, and see Num. xi. 4.

with Nathanael, "Whence knowest thou me?"¹ He could assure us that His eye had been upon us under the fig-tree, tracing the course of our self-communing when we were in entire seclusion from the world. How especially appropriate is it that this prayer, leading us as it does into the recesses of our own hearts, and forcing upon us the reflection whether there may not lurk there some guilty secret, some hidden cherished sin,—should stand in the forefront of the Communion Office. For is it not the inspired rule of preparation for this Office, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup"?² And, accordingly, here we are reminded that this examination must be spiritual; that it must reach far beyond the actions into the inner man; that it must be a voluntary exposure of the secrets of the conscience to His all-seeing eye, from whom none of those secrets are hid, whether we expose them or not.

But even when an examination of the inner man does not reveal to us any cherished sin, there may be evil lurking in the heart of which we are unconscious, an evil lying open before the eye of God, though it may be hidden from our own eye. All, therefore, have need to pray—some in the consciousness of interior mischief, and some in the possibility of its lurking there unconsciously; "Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit." "Infusion" it is in the Latin; but surely "inspiration," which our Reformers have substituted, is a higher word, and yields a nobler idea. "Infusion" means *pouring into or upon*; and the cognate verb is to be found in the Collect for the Annunciation; "We beseech thee, O Lord, *pour* thy grace *into* our souls" (where our exposition may be consulted). In

¹ St. John i. 48.

² 1 Cor. xi. 28.

this expression the grace of the Spirit is compared to water, — a most Scriptural figure, — (“I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed;”¹ “I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh;”² “I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications;”³) yet perhaps not denoting sufficiently the *internal* character of the Holy Spirit’s operations under the New Dispensation, of which our Lord says, “If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, *out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water*;”⁴ “The water that I shall give him shall be *in him a well of water* springing up into everlasting life.”⁵ — “Inspiration,”⁶ on the other hand, means *breathing into or upon*. When our Lord communicated the Holy Spirit to His apostles after His resurrection, “he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.”⁷ And when the Holy Spirit fell on the assembled disciples at Pentecost, “suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind.”⁸ And this “rushing mighty wind” connects itself with the Lord’s words to Nicodemus, in which the operations of the

¹ Isa. xliv. 3.² Joel ii. 28.³ Zech. xii. 10.⁴ St. John vii. 37, 38.⁵ St. John iv. 14.

⁶ “Inspiration” may be used either for the grace of the Holy Spirit, or for that special miraculous gift by which He qualified the prophets and apostles, and the Scriptural writers generally, to give the Church infallible instruction in Divine truth. Thus, there is a faith which is at the foundation of the spiritual life in all of us (Heb. xi. 1, 6), and without which there is no spiritual life; and there is a “*fides miraculosa*,” a persuasion on the mind of a certain Christian, that he is able on a certain emergency to work a miracle, for which, as the gift of miracles has been withdrawn, there is now no longer any exercise. — (See 1 Cor. xii. 9.)

⁷ St. John xx. 22.⁸ Acts ii. 2.

Spirit are compared with those of the wind ; “ The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth : so is every one that is born of the Spirit.”¹ Wind, fire, and water are the three great purifying agencies in nature, for which reason they are all made emblems of the Holy Spirit, who is the great purifying agency in grace. And let us learn from this petition that we are not pure, unless our thoughts are pure. Innocence as to deeds, innocence even as to words, does not constitute that purity which the heart-searching God requires, and requires specially in those who draw near to Him in that Ordinance, in which we make the nearest approach which can be made to Him on earth. There must be a clean heart, a heart purified by faith,² a heart sprinkled from an evil conscience,³ in order to this approach. The first of these symbols, the wind, brings before us much more clearly than the other two the freeness and independence of the Holy Spirit’s agency. We may use fire and water for the purpose of purification at our own will ; these elements are our servants ; but we cannot command or control the wind ; “ it bloweth where it listeth.” The word “ inspiration ” has taught us an important lesson if it impresses us with our entire dependence upon God in the matter of our sanctification and salvation, and makes us feel that sanctification and salvation to be of mere grace, and not procured by our own endeavours, however strenuous.

It will be observed that in the original Latin of the Collect, the words are “ Cleanse the thoughts of *our* heart,” which last word the translator has turned into the plural. Perhaps he has done well in altering the number ;

¹ St. John iii. 8.² See Acts xv. 9.³ See Heb. x. 22.

but the singular number in this connexion is not an inaccuracy, nor is it wanting in Scriptural warrant. The Church is one in the sight of God; "that they may be one, as we are;"¹ "we being many are one bread, and one body;"² "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul."³ When, therefore, the collective Church approaches God, she may justly say "Cleanse the thoughts of *our heart*, which, indeed, is but *one heart*, for we 'are all one in Christ Jesus.'"⁴ And when an apostle gives his valedictory blessing to a collective Church, he may justly say, "Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with *your spirit*" (μετὰ τοῦ πνεύματος ὑμῶν).⁵ And such expressions ought to act as a tacit reproof of the divisions among Christians,—an implicit censure of their being so far from "perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."⁶

"That we may perfectly love thee." What is the perfect love of God? The loving Him "with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength"⁷—the loving Him with the love of gratitude; with the love of instinct and natural attraction, as drawn towards Him by the conviction that He is our chief good; and with the love of the judgment and reason, as being in all His attributes supremely worthy of love. But observe the close connexion of this aspiration with the petition, "Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts . . . that we may perfectly love thee." Before the perfect love of God can be formed in any heart it must be cleansed, not only from the love of sin, but from all idolatrous love of the creatures. Love the creatures indeed we may (nay, we are commanded to love our neighbour as ourselves⁸),

¹ St. John xvii. 11.² 1 Cor. x. 17.³ Acts iv. 32.⁴ Gal. iii. 28.⁵ Gal. vi. 18.⁶ 1 Cor. i. 10.⁷ St. Mark xii. 30.⁸ *Ibid.* xii. 31.

but we must love them in and for God, and in subordination to Him; we must regard them as borrowing all that they have of beauty, and excellence, and worth from Him, just as all the fair colours of Nature are really resident, not in Nature, but in the light,—are borrowed from the sun. An idolized creature in any corner of the heart excludes God from that corner. That idol, therefore, must be torn down, the thoughts of the heart must be cleansed from it, before we can “love God perfectly.”

“And worthily magnify thy holy Name;”—in the original, which is not quite so full, “worthily praise thee.” Observe that praise follows in the train of love; the magnifying of God’s Name is the outcome, the natural and necessary expression, of love for Him. Praise is the voice of love, as prayer is the voice of faith. Prayer would be an absolute impossibility, where there is no faith; for “he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him;”¹ and praise is an equal impossibility, where the heart is absolutely untouched by the love of God in any form. And let us remember that the Holy Communion, for which this Collect forms a preparation, is a sacrifice of praise. For do we not say, after celebrating it, “We thy humble servants entirely desire thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this *our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving*”?

In conclusion; it cannot be too strongly urged upon those who offer this prayer at the opening of the Office of the Holy Communion, and say “Amen” from the ground of their hearts to the Priest’s recital of it,² that they must

¹ Heb. xi. 6.

² *Amen* is to be said by the people to the Collect (as is shown by its being printed in Italics), though to the Lord’s Prayer it is to be said by the Priest alone, which is indicated by its being printed in the same type as the Prayer itself.

assuredly believe in the answer to it being vouchsafed, if they would really possess the boon they ask for.¹ It is not mere prayer, however fervent and persevering, but believing prayer, which is crowned with success,—prayer in which the faith of the petitioner lays hold of the love of God in Christ, and of the truth of the promises made to us in Christ. “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all,” He who gives Him to us afresh sacramentally in this holy Ordinance, “how shall he not with him also freely give us” that Spirit, which is the first and most essential requisite to make the Ordinance of avail?² We must recognise in God a longing to give us His Spirit, far stronger and deeper than any which we discover in our own hearts to seek it; for has He not said to us by the Son of His love; “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?”³ Will the veriest ruffian share his last crust of bread with his hungry and crying child, and shall not the heavenly Father, who is light⁴ and love,⁵ respond to the first earnest cry of His baptized children for that grace which is the sustenance of the soul? To suppose for a moment that we are more solicitous and earnest about our sanctification and salvation than He, is virtually to deny His message of reconciliation, and thereby to throw such discredit upon His truth and love as to shut ourselves out from a participation in them.

¹ See St. Mark xi. 24.

² See Rom. viii. 32.

³ St. Luke xi. 13.

⁴ See 1 John i. 5.

⁵ See 1 John iv. 8, 16.

PART II.

COLLECTS VARYING WITH THE ECCLESIASTICAL SEASON.

CHAPTER I.

THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious Majesty to judge both the quick and dead, we may rise to the life immortal, through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, now and ever. Amen.

THIS magnificent Collect was first made in 1549. It came from the pen of Cranmer and those who were engaged under him in revising the old Latin Offices, and adapting them to the use of the Reformed Church; and, like other passages of the Prayer Book which originated with them, it shows how abundantly qualified they were for their task. But as, wherever they can do so, they appear in the character of translators rather than composers, why did they reject the Collect for the First Sunday in Advent which was found in the old Office Books, and which is perfectly free from taint of error and superstition? It ran thus; "O Lord, raise up, we pray thee, thy power and come, that through thy protection we may be delivered from the dangers which hang over us by reason of our sins, and through thy making us free we may be saved."¹ Not only is there no mischief here, but

¹ Excita quæsumus, Domine, potentiam tuam et veni, ut ab imminen-

there is considerable point, when this first Collect of the Christian Year is compared with the last. The last is a prayer that God would "stir up the wills of" His "faithful people," would, at the end of the year, rouse their dormant energies to make the most of the short time which yet remains to them; "Stir up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people; that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may of thee be plenteously rewarded." But if the sinner must draw

tibus peccatorum nostrorum periculis, te mereamur protegente eripi, te liberante salvari. Qui vivis et regnas cum Deo Patre in unitate Spiritus Sancti Deus, per omnia sæcula sæculorum. Amen.—*Miss. Sar.* It is worthy of note that the Collects in the Sarum Missal for the First, Third, and Fourth Sundays of Advent, are all addressed directly to the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity (as, indeed, is ours for the Third Sunday of this season). The Church seems to place herself by memory, which recalls the First, or by hope, which looks forward to the Second Advent, in front of those great visitations, and directly to invoke the coming of 'Ο ἐρχόμενος ("He that should come," St. Matt. xi. 3), "The Coming One." Undoubtedly there is something solemn in this thrice repeated "Come, Lord Jesus" (Ναὶ ἔρχου, Κύριε Ἰησοῦ, Rev. xxii. 20), notwithstanding what we have said a little lower down as to poverty of conception and repetition of the same idea. The addressing of prayers to the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, though often practised by way of fully recognising His Deity, has never been the rule, simply because the theory of prayer assigns to Him the place of the Mediator through whom we approach God, as it does to the Third Person the place of the Prompter, who puts the prayer in our mouth; "Through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father," Eph. ii. 18. And more especially has this been the rule in the Office of the Holy Communion, which has constantly been regarded (in some sense or other) as the Christian Sacrifice, and which indeed is so regarded in our own Liturgy ("We thy humble servants entirely desire thy fatherly goodness to accept *this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving*"). For it is Christ, the memorial of whose sacrifice is made in the Holy Communion before God and man; and again it is Christ who Himself, as our great High Priest, as "minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle" (Heb. viii. 2), conducts and gives effect to that highest act of worship. The theory of the Ordinance demands that Christ shall be the Victim whose sacrifice is commemorated, and the Priest who pleads the merits of it, not the God before whom the memorial is made.

nigh to God with redoubled energy, his utmost of endeavour will come to nothing except God draw nigh to him. Disciples may toil in rowing against a contrary wind and tide, but they can make no way until Jesus descends from the mountain, and, walking calmly and majestically over the heaving water, passes into the fishing-boat. Then immediately shall the ship be at the land whither they go.¹ Therefore the Christian Year, which closes with a prayer for the livelier endeavours of the human will, formerly opened with a prayer for that descent of Christ by preventing grace into the heart, without which all endeavour must be fruitless; "Stir up thy strength, and come and save us;"² "O Lord, raise up, we pray thee, thy power and come."—Thus much might be said in favour of retaining the original Collect. But our Reformers had to consider that this same Collect, or one closely resembling it, makes its appearance in a fuller and better form on the Fourth Sunday in Advent, when, being close to Christmas, we are (in a manner) just on the eve of the coming of Christ. There seemed to them, no doubt, some poverty of conception in merely echoing on the fourth Sunday of a Church season the accents of the first. In the Collects of Advent, as they stood in the old Latin Office Books, there seemed to be, not indeed anything superstitious or doctrinally objectionable, but a tame repetition of the same idea. So they resolved to throw some new blood, if I may so say, into the Advent Collects; and very brisk and racy blood it is, as we shall see. While this first Collect glows with unusual fire and spirit (such as it might not have been easy to give to it, had its writers been cramped by the exigencies of translation), it, at the same time, possesses all the excellences of the old Collects, of which

¹ See St. John vi. 19, 20, 21.

² Ps. lxxx. 2.

Canon Bright most justly tells us that "they exhibit an exquisite skill of antithesis, and a rhythmical harmony which the ear is loth to lose," and that "they are never weak, never diluted, never drawling, never ill arranged."¹ How entirely does this description hold good of the short prayer before us! How terse it is, and yet how full of matter! How admirably arranged! How skilful in its antitheses, two of them indeed being Scriptural antitheses—"cast away," "put on;" "works of darkness, armour of light;" "in the time of this mortal life," "in the last day;" and again, "this mortal life," "the life immortal;" "to visit us," "to judge the quick and dead;" "in great humility," "in his glorious Majesty!" And, finally, what a grand roll and rhythm there is about the English, so that it is hard to say whether the ear or the mind finds most gratification in it!

Before observing upon its contents, I will just guard against a misunderstanding which might arise from part of the language employed. "The *time* of this mortal life" might seem to some to mean the season of the year at which we have now arrived, being the ecclesiastical season of Advent, in which we commemorate our Lord's coming in the flesh. But this is not the case. In the words "in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility," the relative refers not to the word "time," but to the immediately preceding words "mortal life." Our Blessed Lord being, as a Divine Person, *immortal*, came to visit us "in this *mortal* life,"—there is no reference to His having come at a particular season of the year. "In the time of this mortal life" is merely an expansion of the idea contained in the short but pregnant word, "now." The "now" is "the accepted time" and "the day of salvation,"²

¹ "Ancient Collects," p. 200.

² 2 Cor. vi. 2.

when it is open to us (if we will) to "cast away the works of darkness." And "time" has here the meaning which it has in that passage of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, and elsewhere; it means *a fit and proper time, an opportunity*; "Give us grace to put on the armour of light *now*—that is, in the opportunity which this mortal life gives us of doing so." It is a fleeting opportunity, because our life here is mortal. And when it is said that He "came to visit us," the meaning is not merely that He came *to pay us a visit*; but it is a piece of Scriptural phraseology, denoting the solemn coming of Christ to God's vineyard, the Jewish Church, with the offer of grace and salvation, which offer the Jews as a nation rejected, according to that word of His own, when weeping over their city, "because thou knewest not *the time*" (the opportunity) "of thy visitation."¹

And now as to the contents of the Collect. It is obviously founded upon a text in the Epistle, the very words of which text it adopts, so that no one can possibly mistake the reference. I may observe that the allusions to Holy Scripture in the old Collects, though abundant, are for the most part covert, and lie under the surface; while in the Collects composed by the Reformers, what we find is rather quotation than allusion. Here, for example, certain words of St. Paul to the Romans are cited: "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light."² And what is the simple, holy, beautiful thought of the Apostle, as it flows on from point to point under the guidance of the Holy Ghost? The day of Christ's second coming, which shall cheer the drooping hearts of His faithful ones, dispel all

¹ St. Luke xix. 44.² Rom. xiii. 12.

shadows, clear up all doubts, and chase away all sorrows, is at hand. What we do when a new day dawns upon us, is to cast away our sleeping apparel, spring up from our beds, and clothe ourselves in the attire of the day. What we have to do, as the Second Advent draws nearer and nearer, shining ever more and more unto the perfect day, is "to awake out of" the "sleep" of spiritual sloth, and cast away that raiment of "works of darkness" in which we have enwrapped ourselves; "unfruitful works," from which no solid profit or satisfaction is to be had, though they may yield a momentary pleasure; works which shun, and will not bear, the light of God's Presence; and which, as laying the conscience under a galling yoke, are a drudgery, like the works which Pharaoh's taskmasters exacted from Israel.¹ And what are we to "put upon us," when we arise? Apparel? Well, if you will, the apparel of the righteousness of Christ, which becomes ours by faith. But something more than apparel, if we would be safe. A man, who is to go where arrows and bullets are whirring through the air in every direction, should have on him something over his coat. And the fiery darts, hurled by the wicked one and his angels, *are* flying in every direction, and (mark this) flying more quickly and thickly, and with a deadlier aim, as the day of the Advent approaches; for can we suppose that the devil is ignorant that the time of his final overthrow draws nigh? And is it not written, "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time"?² What then? If we would be safe, we must at least cover the vital parts of our person with armour. We shall be in an evil case, if

¹ See Exod. v. 10-14.

² Rev. xii. 12.

either heart or head be pierced by arrow or bullet. The vital organs of spiritual life are faith, hope, and love. That we should maintain a conviction of the reality of unseen things, and of God's pardoning love in Christ; that, in the belief of this love, our hearts should reciprocally open towards Him and towards all His creatures; and that, notwithstanding all there is within and around to depress, to retard, to beat us down, we should still be sanguine of success through the blood and grace of Christ,—all these are points essential to our spiritual safety. These points must be secured. The Apostle exhorts us to secure them, when he says to the Thessalonians, "Let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation."¹ And the Collect sends us to God for this breastplate and helmet, teaching us to ask Him for grace to put them on. God's armour is not like that with which Saul arrayed David, a cumbersome impediment.² When He arms us with His panoply, putting the helmet of hope upon our head, and the breastplate of faith and love upon our heart, and girding upon us "the sword of the Spirit, which is" His "word,"³ He quickens us thereby, and makes us nimble and alert for the spiritual conflict. "It is God, that girdeth me with strength of war: and maketh my way perfect. He maketh my feet like harts' feet: and setteth me up on high. He teacheth mine hands to fight: and mine arms shall break even a bow of steel."⁴

Before leaving the Collect, observe how skilfully the writer has combined in it the two lines of Advent meditation, the retrospect of the first with the anticipation of the second Advent, and how judiciously he has thrown

¹ 1 Thess. v. 8.

³ See Eph. vi. 17.

² See 1 Sam. xvii. 38, 39.

⁴ Ps. xviii. 32, 33, 34, P.B.V.

each into high relief by its vivid contrast with the other. "Jesus Christ came to visit us *in great humility*;" "He shall come again *in his glorious Majesty* to judge both the quick and dead." "She brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling-clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn,"¹—this is the "great humility." "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God;"² "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats,"³—this is the "glorious Majesty."—And to the contrast between the "great humility" and the "glorious Majesty" our Lord Himself called the attention of the Jewish Sanhedrim by a single word, the force of which escapes the cursory reader, and sometimes perplexes the more thoughtful one. When adjured by the high priest to tell them whether He was the Christ, the Son of God, He replies; "Thou hast said" (an affirmation of His Messiahship and Divine Sonship); "*nevertheless* I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."⁴ What is the force of this *nevertheless*?⁵

¹ St. Luke ii. 7. ² 1 Thess. iv. 16. ³ St. Matt. xxv. 31, 32.

⁴ St. Matt. xxvi. 64.

⁵ *πλὴν*. This conjunction has the same force in St. Matt. xviii. 7 ("It must needs be that offences come; *but* woe to that man by whom the offence cometh"); in Phil. i. 18 ("*Notwithstanding*, every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached"); Phil. iv. 14 (I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. *Notwithstanding*, ye have well done that ye did communicate with my affliction"); and St. Luke xxii. 42 ("*nevertheless*, not my will, but thine, be done"). It is less sharply adversative, and amounts to little more than "but," in St. Luke vi. 24, 35, and other places.

It wraps up (like the "therefore" in St. John xix. 11) a whole train of thought. Our Lord would say; "Let not my present humble guise stagger you. Ye look on things after the outward appearance, and accordingly regard me as being, what I seem to the eye of sense to be, a bound criminal, defenceless and weak, in the presence and power of his judges. Nevertheless, believe me, ye shall one day form another estimate of things. Ye, as criminals, shall stand before Me as your judge, and acknowledge Me as the arbiter of your destiny, when I sit on the right hand of power, and come in the clouds of heaven—a second Joseph, before whom, when he was the governor over the land, his brethren bowed down themselves with their faces to the earth,—and a Joseph widely different in appearance from the poor stripling whom they had sold into the hand of the Ishmeelites."¹ This pregnant "nevertheless" has been the theme of many pieces of Christian hymnology;² but nowhere has its force been more tersely or simply brought out than in the majestic Collect before us.

Observe, finally, that this is perhaps the most doctrinal

¹ See Gen. xlii. 6, and xxxvii. 28.

² As for instance of Bishop Heber's Hymn for the Second Sunday in Advent (No. 1):—

The Lord will come ! but not the same
As once in lowly form He came,
A silent Lamb to slaughter led,
The bruised, the suffering, and the dead.

The Lord will come ! a dreadful form,
With wreath of flame, and robe of storm,
On cherub wings, and wings of wind,
Anointed Judge of human-kind !

Can this be He who wont to stray
A pilgrim on the world's highway ;
By power oppressed, and mocked by pride ?
Oh God ! is this the Crucified ?

of all the Collects, being indeed in itself a short Apostles' Creed ; for here we have the Divine Sonship of Christ ; His birth into this world, nay, and (implicitly) His sufferings and death too (for were not they the climax of His humiliation ?) ; His return from the right hand of God (inferring His previous resurrection and ascension) ; His judgment of the quick and dead ; and, finally, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Add to which that, in the "Give us grace," there is the clearest recognition of the work of God the Holy Ghost.—What then shall we learn from the fact that this, the first Collect of the Christian Year, is also the most doctrinal ? This lesson, at all events, will not be amiss nor unsuitable to our times, that the whole structure of Christian Prayer is built upon doctrine ; that to cut away dogma—*i.e.* the definite statement of doctrine—from prayer, is (like houghing the horses of the Canaanite kings¹) to cut the very nerve and sinew which gives prayer its power of movement ; for prayer, while indeed it is an affection of the heart, is not a mere sentiment, but a sentiment arising from the belief of some Divine truth. Prayer is nothing else than the voice of faith apprehending that truth,—taking that truth to itself.

¹ See Josh. xi. 6, 9.

APPENDIX.

On the terminations of the Collects and Orisons found in the Book of Common Prayer.

THE termination of the Collect for the First Sunday in Advent, which, as will be seen below, has its peculiarity,

leads me to speak generally of the various forms in which the Prayers of the English Church are ended. As regards the forms used in the mediæval Church before the Reformation, rules for them are given in great detail in a Latin *memoria technica*, at pp. 73, 74, of Mr. Chambers's "Sarum Psalter, or Seven Ordinary Hours of Prayer" [Masters, 78 New Bond Street, 1852]. These rules are purely technical; and, according to them, the particular formula in which a prayer is ended is determined merely by some such accidental circumstance as Christ, or the Holy Ghost, being mentioned in it or not. Here is a free translation of five lines of the shorter *memoria technica* :—

If you address the Father in your prayer, say [at the close], "through the Lord."

If you make mention of Christ [in the course of your prayer], you should say, "through the same."

If you address your prayer to Christ, remember to say at the end, "who livest," etc.

If Christ be mentioned at the end of a collect, say, "who with thee," etc.

If you make mention of the Holy Ghost, say, near the end, "of the same," (*i.e.* in the unity of the same).

Two points are to be noticed respecting these various terminations, as they appear in the Sarum Missal; one is, that the whole termination is never given at full length, as in our Book of Common Prayer. "Through," or "who livest," or "who with thee liveth," is usually all that is given. Hence there would be room for the officiating person to make slight variations of the words, although the one or two words in the Office Book would determine substantially what the concluding formula was to be. The second and more important point is, that in the mnemonic lines referred to above there is no mention at all of the

doxological ending, of which we have so noble and complete a specimen in our first Post-Communion Prayer; "through Jesus Christ our Lord; by whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honour and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end," and of which the Book of Common Prayer furnishes seven other instances. I am not deeply versed enough in the old Liturgies to say for certain whether the doxological ending (as distinct from "who livest" or "who with thee liveth") is found in the mediæval Offices; but the absence of any notice of it in the mnemonic lines looks as if it were not.¹ Sermons, we

¹ Canon Bright, whose authority on such subjects is as great as that of any liturgical scholar in this country, writes to me thus on this question:—

"As to the doxological ending of some of our prayers, as far as I know, there is but one specimen of this ending in the original Latin forms, and this is in the Canon of the Mass. [See Muratori I., *col.* 697.]:

"Per Christum Dom. nostr. Per quem hæc omnia, Domine, semper bona creas, sanctificas, vivificas, benedicis, et præstas nobis. Per ipsum, et cum ipso, et in ipso est tibi, Deo Patri omnipotenti, in unitate Spiritûs sancti omnis honor et gloria per omnia sæcula sæculorum. Amen."

Through Christ our Lord, through whom thou createst all these things, ever good, and sanctifiest, quickenest, blessest, and givest them unto us. Through him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honour and glory is unto thee, God the Father Almighty, world without end. Amen.

"So venerable a prayer would naturally associate the doxological ending with thoughts and recollections the most precious and sacred. And from it, I conceive, the instances in our Prayer Book have been derived, one of these being the representative in our Liturgy of the close of that same old prayer,—I refer, of course, to the first Post-Communion prayer, 'By whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honour and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end.' If there are in the Sacramentaries other instances of this ending, I am not aware of them. . . It was a happy thought in the revisers (or re-organizers) of the Church Service, to adopt, to the extent which you point out, this beautiful Collect ending. . . In the older Eastern Liturgies, 'through Christ' occurs with a doxological addition in several places, *e.g.* in the

know, were usually in ancient times concluded with a doxology; and it may have suggested itself to the compilers of our Prayer Book that a similar termination might be with great propriety adopted for prayers. At all events they *have* adopted it.

In the analysis which is here offered to the reader of the various terminations of our authorised Prayers, the author has attempted to discern a principle in the employment of the bare or the clothed termination. Perhaps in some cases the explanation he has assigned is fanciful, and will not hold; perhaps the adoption of one termination in preference to another may have been (in the particular case) an accident, ruled by no very discernible law. But he has so very often found thought and study underlying the words of the Prayer Book, where no justification of them offered itself on the surface, that the habit has grown upon him of expecting to find a reason everywhere. He need only add here that in such varied endings as are in sentiment homogeneous, he doubts not that our Reformers studied both variety and rhythm, as an agreeable relief to the ear and mind of the worshippers.—To turn then to our analysis of the terminations.

Clementine,—‘through Christ, etc., through whom to thee be glory and worship.’ [Hammond, *Liturgies, Eastern and Western*, pp. 5, 6, 8]; or in another prayer of the same Liturgy, ‘through thy Christ, with whom to thee and the Holy Spirit’ [*ib.* p. 20]. I do not imagine that our Reformers were familiar with Greek Liturgic forms, although they got hold of a ‘prayer of an antiphon,’ and labelled it ‘A prayer of St. Chrysostom;’ but anyhow, the doxological endings in some of our Collects do resemble those of the Greek forms, although they were probably not derived from them.”

In a letter of a subsequent date, however, Canon Bright writes: “I find in Maskell’s *Monumenta Ritualia* (vol. ii. p. 269) another case of a doxological ending in a prayer to the ‘proper’ (guardian) ‘angel;’—‘præstante Domino nostro Jesu Christo, cui est honor et gloria, etc.’”

I. First, there is *the bare mediation-ending*, the simplest and commonest form of which is, "through Jesus Christ our Lord," or, as it is in the opening Collect of the Communion Service, and again in the final prayer of the "Publick Baptism of Infants," and again in the prayer for Absolution in the Communion Service, "through Christ our Lord." Here the worshipper, by a mental act, presents to God the Person of the Saviour, either simply in His official character, as our Prophet, Priest, and King, or (which is the more usual formula) with an explicit recognition and avowal that the Jesus of the New Testament is the Christ of Prophecy. But this bare mediation-ending is very much varied, so as at once to avoid monotony, and bring out certain parts of the thought with greater emphasis.

Thus, we have, "through *our only Mediator and Advocate*, J. C. our Lord" (Final Prayer of Litany); "through our Lord *and Saviour* J. C." (Second Collect at the end of the Communion Service); "through the same *thy Son* J. C. our Lord" (concluding Prayer in Private Baptism); "through J. C. our *Mediator and Redeemer*" (Collect in the Order for the Burial of the Dead); "through J. C. our Lord *and Saviour*" (alternative Thanksgiving after a Storm at Sea); "*in the Name and Mediation* of J. C. our *most blessed Lord and Saviour*" (Prayer for the High Court of Parliament). Again; "for his *sake*" (General Confession); "this we beg for Jesus Christ's¹ *sake*" (Prayer

¹ Erroneously printed in our present Prayer Books "for Jesus Christ his sake." In 1662, when the prayer was first introduced, it seems to have been thought that the *s* of the old Saxon genitival inflection was a fragment of the possessive pronoun *his*. If so, how are we to account for the fact that the *s* is equally attached to *feminine* names, as "Elizabeth's book," "Mary's pen"? "Christes" is, in fact, as much the genitive case of "Christ" as "domini" is of "dominus" in Latin.

In a private letter previously quoted from, Canon Bright says:

for All Conditions of men); "for thy dear Son's *sake*, J. C. our Lord" (Alternative Collect for the Queen in the Communion Service); "for Jesus Christ's *sake*, our only Mediator and Advocate" (Prayer for the Church militant); "Help, Lord, and save us for *thy mercy's sake* in J. C. thy Son, our Lord" (first Prayer to be used in Storms at Sea); "Through *thy mercies* in J. C. our Lord" (Thanksgiving for Rain); "for the *honour* of our Advocate and Mediator, J. C." (Prayer for the Clergy and People); "for the *love of*" (*i.e.* for Thy love towards) "thy only Son, our Saviour, J. C." (third Collect at Evening Prayer); "for the *honour* of J. C. our Mediator and Advocate" (Prayer that may be said after any of the former). Again, we have "through the *merits* of J. C. our Saviour" (second Collect at Evening Prayer); "through the *merits* of thy only Son, J. C. our Lord" (Prayer in the time of War and Tumults); "vouchsafe to give us, for the *worthiness* of thy Son, J. C. our Lord" (fifth Collect at the end of the Communion Service); "through the *merits* of thy most dearly beloved Son J. C. our Lord" (Post-Absolution Prayer in the "Visitation of the Sick"); "through the *merits* of J. C. thine only Son our Lord" ("Commendatory Prayer," *ibid.*); "Hear, Lord, and save us, for the *infinite merits* of our blessed Saviour, thy Son, our Lord J. C." (alternative Prayer to be used in Storms at Sea); and more fully, "through the *merits and mediation* of J. C., thine only Son, our Lord and Saviour" (Prayer for a sick person, when there appeareth small hope of recovery); "through the *merits and mediation* of J. C. our

"There is a reference to 'Christ his sake' (= *Christes* sake) in Archbishop Trench's 'English, Past and Present,' p. 116. And in a curious set of rhymes about St. Chad, once written upon windows along the sides of Peterborough cloister, the words 'Christys knight' (= Christ's knight) occurred."

Lord" (Prayer for persons troubled in mind or in conscience); "*through the merits and mediation* of thy blessed Son, J. C. our Lord" (Prayer in Communion Service to be said by the people after the Minister).

In this variety of forms do we present Christ in our hearts to God, pleading with the Father His own *mercy* which gave us the Son, the *merits* of His Son, the *mediation* of His Son, His *love* for His Son, the *honour* of His Son, the all-prevailing *Name*, above every name, which He hath given to His Son, as well as simply setting that Son before Him, which we do when we say, "*through Jesus Christ our Lord.*"

But it may be asked whether all the prayers of the Church (with the exception of those addressed to the Saviour, which, as being addressed *to* Him, cannot be offered *through* Him) have mediation-endings? There are exceptions, though perhaps more apparent than real. The Prayer of Access at the Holy Communion ("We do not presume to come," etc.) has no explicit mediation-ending; the petition "that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body, and our souls washed through his most precious blood," being in fact a prayer that His atonement and mediation may be made available to us. The Prayer of Consecration also is without a mediation-ending, the solemn rehearsal before God of the words used in the original Institution, "my Body, which is given for you," "my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you . . . for the remission of sins," being in effect tantamount to a mediation-ending; the rehearsal of the Institution before God is a pleading of Christ's atonement and mediation *in act*, as the mediation-ending is a pleading of it *in words*. The prayer in the Confirmation Service, which precedes the laying on of hands (a very ancient

prayer, found in the Sacramentary of Gelasius, A.D. 494, but probably much earlier), is another instance, and less easy to explain, since one might look for some explicit recognition that the living water could spring only out of the smitten rock. All that I can suggest, in the way of explanation, is that genuine faith in Christ, the principle which makes His mediation available to us, is presupposed very emphatically in the catechumens for whom the prayer is offered; for the Bishop prays thus for them: "Almighty and everliving God, who . . . HAST GIVEN UNTO THEM FORGIVENESS OF ALL THEIR SINS." Those words are not true, except on the hypothesis that the Catechumens have exercised true faith in Christ. And to exercise true faith in Christ is to plead for ourselves His atonement, and present ourselves to God under the shelter of His mediation. The mediation-clause, therefore, is implied, though it is not expressed, in this prayer.

Two more endings of prayers present themselves for consideration under this head, in which (for whatever reasons) the "through" of the usual mediation-ending is exchanged for "by." One is the Collect for the Purification, which runs thus, and is thus punctuated in our ordinary Prayer Books:—

"Almighty and everliving God, we humbly beseech thy Majesty, that, as thy only-begotten Son was this day presented in the temple in substance of our flesh, so we may be presented unto thee with pure and clean hearts, by the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*" As the equivalent in the old Latin Collect of the words "by the same thy Son J. C. our Lord" is "per eundem Dominum," we take "by" to mean merely "through," though it is a little hard to see why in this instance the usual preposition should have been discarded to make

room for another. On this hypothesis, our Blessed Lord will not be the person who makes the presentation, but the Mediator through whom the acceptability of the offering comes. The person making the presentation will be the Christian minister, who has watched anxiously over the faith and morals of his flock, according to St. Paul's own arrangement of the figure; "I have espoused you to one husband, that *I may present you* as a chaste virgin to Christ," (2 Cor. xi. 2); "warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that *we may present every man* perfect in Christ Jesus," (Col. i. 28); and, "that I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the Gospel of God, that *the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable*, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost," (Rom. xv. 16). But if the persons who punctuated the Collect (and were these its composers, or the King's Printers?) are to be taken as an authority for its interpretation, then we must suppose "by" to indicate that Jesus Christ is the Person presenting the offering,¹

¹ This is the view which Canon Bright and Mr. Medd take of the meaning of the "by;" for their rendering is; "*ita nos facias purificatis tibi mentibus præsentari, ab eodem Jesu Christo Domino nostro.*" [Libri Precum Publicarum Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ Versio Latina. Londini, Oxonii, Cantabrigiæ, 1865.]

But in private letters which I have received from Canon Bright, since the publication of the work referred to, he writes thus:—

"It should be remembered, as to the use of *by* in the Purification Collect, that *by* was very often used in old English devotions for *through*, as in the Prymer edited by Maskell in his 'Monumenta Ritualia,' vol. ii. . . . The use of *by* as equivalent to the Latin *per*, is found frequently in Bishop Hilsey's Primer. [See Burton's 'Three Primers,' pp. 328, 342, 345—(a version of the Annunciation Collect;—'may be brought,' etc., '*by* the same,' etc.) 352, 354, 365 (another of the same) . . .], whereas in Henry VIIIth's Primer, six years later, *through* appears instead of *by*.

"I do not feel *sure* that our 'ab' in the Purification Collect was not a mistake, all things considered."

not the Person through whose mediation it is accepted. For the usual mediation-ending "through" is uniformly preceded by a semicolon; whereas here we have only a comma, which seems to show a different relation borne by the ending to the body of the prayer. And for this other arrangement of the figure there is also Scriptural warrant; "you hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, *to present you holy and unblameable and unreproueable in his sight,*" (Col. i. 21, 22); and "that *he might present it to himself* a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing," (Eph. v. 27). The truth is that Christ may be regarded with equal propriety both as the Presenter, and also as the Person to whom the presentation is made, and the "by" will acquire a fulness and richness of signification, when we find in it both these meanings.

Another "by" is found, in the place of "through," in the second prayer of the Office of Publick Baptism; "and may come to the eternal kingdom which thou hast promised by Christ our Lord." Here, if we are to accept the punctuation as a guide to the meaning, there can be no doubt that the words signify, not that the eternal kingdom was won through Christ's mediation (which yet of course is most true), but that it was promised in His preaching, who "brought life and immortality to light." Here again, however, the "by" may well be enriched and deepened by embracing both ideas under it.

We must not omit to notice at the close of this section the peculiar ending of the Collect for Peace at Morning Prayer,—*"that we, surely trusting in thy defence, may not fear the power of any adversaries, through the might of J. C. our Lord."* In the Sacramentary of Gelasius, and the Missal of Sarum, this prayer has the usual *Per*, etc., indi-

cating the bare mediation-ending ; but our Reformers have chosen, probably for the sake of variety, to give the ending another turn. "*Through the might of J. C.*" must mean "through his protecting power;" but this protecting power He wields as "Mediator between God and man," sheltering us "under the shadow of his wings," not only from "all assaults of" external "enemies," but also from the indictments brought against us by the law of God, and by an accusing conscience.¹

II. But, secondly, we have *the clothed mediation-ending*, that is, the usual "through J. C. our Lord," with an act of either praise or adoration superadded to it. The act of praise takes the form of a doxology ("to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour," etc); and the act of adoration takes the form of a profession of faith in the Holy Trinity ("who with thee and the Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth," etc.)

(1.) In the General Thanksgiving we have this form of the doxological ending; "to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost be all honour and glory, world without end;" in the first Post-Communion Prayer, "by whom" ("by" here evidently in the sense of "through"), "and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honour and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end;" in the alternative Post-Communion Prayer, "to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end;" and in the Collect of Thanksgiving after Victory or Deliverance from an Enemy at Sea, "to whom, with thee and the Holy Spirit, as for all

¹ The significance of the peculiar termination of the Collect for the Second Sunday in Advent, "which thou hast given as *in* our Saviour Jesus Christ," will be found at the end of the chapter on that Collect. [See below, p. 119.]

thy mercies, so in particular for this Victory and Deliverance, be all glory and honour, world without end." In these four instances, the strict propriety of a doxological ending is so evident that it need not be dwelt upon. Thanksgiving calls for an ascription of praise; and the Holy Communion is the highest form in which the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving can be offered.

Again; at the close of the Collect for the Fourth Sunday in Advent we have the doxology, superadded to a peculiar mediation-ending, "through the satisfaction of thy Son our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost be honour and glory, world without end." Advent, although a season of humiliation, is also a season of exultation in the prospect of Christ's Advent. Hence three of its four Collects end in praise or adoration, and praise is here particularly in place, since we have just made mention of the Lord's "satisfaction" (*indulgentia tuæ propitiationis*, —*Miss. Sar.*), and are encouraging ourselves in the hope that His "bountiful grace and mercy" will "*speedily* help and deliver us." We are praying under strong anticipations of faith; and hence the doxological clause.

Why should the Collect for St. Thomas's Day have a doxological ending more than other Saints' Days? "Hear us, O Lord, through the same J. C., to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, now and for evermore." It may possibly be, because to bring good out of evil is the highest glory of God, and, as the Collect rehearses, the greater confirmation of the faith was a good brought out of St. Thomas's scepticism. He himself adored Christ after his doubts were put to flight; and the Church ascribes glory to God for the benefit which she has reaped from those doubts, and for the evidence by which they were dissipated.

The first Collect after the Communion in "the Ordering of Deacons," has this doxology, "through the same thy Son our Saviour J. C., to whom be glory and honour world without end." The corresponding prayer in "the Consecration of Bishops" has an adoration-ending ("the Lord the righteous Judge, who liveth and reigneth one God with the Father and the Holy Ghost, world without end"), while that in "the Ordering of Priests" has a bare mediation-ending. The institution of the Christian ministry, and the call of successive generations to it, is a subject of praise (as is fully declared in the prayer immediately preceding the Ordination of Priests), and at the conferring of its highest and lowest grades praise and adoration are peculiarly in place.

The doxology at the end of the prayer "in the time of Dearth and Famine" is the most difficult of all the instances to be explained. We pray that "the scarcity and dearth, which we do now most justly suffer for our iniquity, may through thy goodness be mercifully turned into cheapness and plenty; for the love of Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost be all honour and glory, now and for ever." We do not see any sufficient reason which can be assigned for the use of the doxological termination in this connexion.

(2.) The adoration-ending ("who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same Spirit, ever one God, world without end,"—Christmas Day) consists of a profession of faith in the Holy Trinity, the Unity of the Godhead being also, in the great majority of cases, expressly recognised by the clause "ever one God," or something tantamount, as, "in the unity of the same Spirit." This is the ending which we should expect to find, and do find, in the Collects for the four great Festivals. In the Collect for Trinity

Sunday, which is addressed not to God the Father singly, but to the entire Trinity, the unity alone is brought out in the close, and there is no express mediation-clause on which it depends—"who livest and reignest, one God, world without end." (Compare this with the rubrical direction given in the "It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty," to the effect that the words "Holy Father" are to be omitted on Trinity Sunday, and with the emphatic bringing out of the Unity in the first words of the Proper Preface for that day, "Who art one God, one Lord").

We find similar terminations in the Collect for the third Sunday in Advent—Advent being a season of exultation, no less than of humiliation, as pointed out above under II. (1.); for the sixth Sunday after the Epiphany, (which also looks forward with chastened hope and joy to the time of Christ's second appearing); for Septuagesima Sunday, (where this adoration-ending is a light which falls athwart the shadows thrown over the Church's prospect by the coming season of humiliation); for the first Sunday in Lent, (where it is meet that He, who for our sake did fast forty days and forty nights, should nevertheless be recognised as a Person in the Blessed Trinity); in the first and third Collects for Good Friday, (where it is meet that the crucified Saviour, who yet is to draw all men unto Him by the power of His Cross, should be thus recognised); for the Sunday after Ascension, (where the recently enacted triumph of our King and God is still fresh upon our minds); for St. Matthew's Day, (where the only reason assignable for the adoration-ending seems to be that the mention of following Jesus in the body of the prayer made it awkward to say "through Jesus Christ," and to say "through the same" would have been bald and unrhythmical to the ear); in the first Collect for the

Queen in the Communion Service, (a suitable adoration of the "King of kings, the Lord of lords, the only Ruler of Princes"); in the Baptismal Service, before the sanctification of the water, (where the eye seems fixed upon the everlasting reward of the righteous, at a period when the mediatorial kingdom shall have been delivered up to the Father, and God shall be all in all, and therefore the mediation-ending is dropped, and the address made, as in the Collect for Trinity Sunday, to the whole Godhead); in the last prayer at the Baptism of Adults, (as if to distinguish that rite by a somewhat higher and more jubilant tone from the Baptism of Infants); in the Collect after Confirmation, (which is to be regarded as the crown and completion of Baptism, by the conferring of the gifts of the Spirit, and in which, therefore, the high and jubilant tone is in place); in the Prayer for a sick Child, (where we thus appropriately remind ourselves that the Lord Jesus is living and reigning with the Father and Holy Ghost above, and administering all things as is most for God's glory, and best for this little one of His flock); in the prayer immediately before the Ordering of Priests, (which is pervaded by a high strain of thanksgiving and adoration); in the corresponding prayer before the Consecration of Bishops, (to which a similar remark will apply); in the first prayer before the Benediction at the Consecration of Bishops, (this function being an unusually solemn and exalted one); and in the Prayer in the end of the Litany at the Queen's Accession, where we ask for the Sovereign "everlasting life and glory in the kingdom of heaven," and the eye therefore is directed heavenward.

In six cases the clause reciting the Unity of the Godhead ("ever one God," or "in the unity of the same Spirit") is left out; these being the Collect for the first

Sunday in Advent ; the Thanksgiving preceding the Publick Baptism of Infants and of Adults ; the Collect at the Ordering of Deacons ; the Collect at the Ordering of Priests ; and the prayer before the examination of one who is to be consecrated Bishop. There can be no doubt that in these cases the unity of the Godhead is implied, though not expressed ; and Canon Bright and Mr. Medd have shown their sense of this in their Latin Version of the Book of Common Prayer by inserting in all these prayers the clause, "in unitate Spiritus Sancti." These six prayers then furnish instances of incomplete adoration-endings, just as certain of the Collects are imperfect specimens, and lack some members, some being without the recital of a doctrine or fact, others without an aspiration, etc. (See the first paragraph of Chap. III. Book I. p. 17.)

CHAPTER II.

THE SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

Blessed Lord, who hast caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning; Grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience, and comfort of thy holy Word, we may embrace, and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

THIS Collect, like the preceding one, is due to our Reformers, and first made its appearance in 1549. Even if we did not know this, we might augur it from the family likeness which the two Collects have to one another. Both are built upon passages in their respective Epistles. Both cite the very words of the passages on which they are based, making no covert allusions to Holy Scripture, but openly proclaiming their relationship to it. Another feature of resemblance between them is, that each of them fills up a gap in the cycle of teaching through which the Collects lead us. "Now is the accepted time" is a thought of a very quickening character, and one which it is very important to bring before the mind in prayer. It is brought before the mind forcibly by the "now in the time of this mortal life" of the first Collect. And surely, that there should be among the Collects a prayer bearing upon our right use of the *written* Word of God was in the highest degree desirable, not to say necessary. It is true that there are in the Saints' Day Collects many references to *parts* of Holy Scripture (as to "the doctrine" of St. Mark, St. Luke, St. John, St. Paul, and of the Apostles and Prophets

in general¹), and also references to the *preached* Word of God (as in the Collects for St. Bartholomew and St. Peter). But the Holy Bible is not a mere collection of treatises, bound up together for convenience' sake, but having no living coherence; it is, as we usually regard it, an organized whole, knit into unity by the one pervading Spirit which moved all the sacred writers, and still breathes in their various treatises; and therefore some recognition of it in our prayers, under that aspect of it, was urgently needed in a Prayer Book for the Reformed Church; and here we have it in a Collect for the right use of "*all* holy Scriptures." It was a great void while it lasted. Cranmer and his colleagues deserve our warmest thanks for having filled it up.

"Blessed Lord." This is the only prayer in the whole Book of Common Prayer, the invocation of which runs in this style. The English word "blessed," as applied to God, is the translation of two entirely different Greek words, one of which is never used in the New Testament of any but God. This latter word, thus limited in its application,² means that God is blessed by all creation as being the

¹ See Collect for St. Simon and St. Jude.

² Εὐλογητός. It occurs eight times in the New Testament, once of God the Son, and seven times of "the God and Father;" St. Mark xiv. 61, "the Christ, the son of the *Blessed*;" St. Luke i. 68, "*Blessed* be the Lord God of Israel;" Rom. i. 25, "the Creator, who is *blessed* for ever;" ix. 5, Christ, who is over all, God *blessed* for ever;" 2 Cor. i. 3, "*Blessed* be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ;" Eph. i. 3, "*Blessed* be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ;" 2 Cor. xi. 31, "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is *blessed* for evermore;" 1 Pet. i. 3, "*Blessed* be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The cognate participle εὐλογημένος is used six times of Christ: "*Blessed* is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" (St. Matt. xxi. 9, and xxiii. 39; St. Mark xi. 9; St. Luke xiii. 35, and xix. 38; St. John xii. 13); once of the "kingdom of our father David, which cometh in the name

fountain of all goodness, wisdom, and power; that all His creatures, as it is said in the hundredth Psalm, "speak good of his Name."¹ The other word, when applied to God, as is the case twice only (and both times in the 1st Epistle to Timothy²), indicates simply the beauty and glory of His

of the Lord" (St. Mark xi. 10); twice of the Blessed Virgin, once by the angel Gabriel, and once by Elizabeth (St. Luke i. 28 and 42); and again by Elizabeth of the Divine Child (*ibid.*); and once of the blessed at the final judgment, "Come, ye *blessed* of my Father" (St. Matt. xxv. 34).

¹ Ps. c. 3, P.B.V.

² *Μακάριος*. 1 Tim. i. 11, "the glorious gospel of the *blessed* God;" and 1 Tim. vi. 15, "the *blessed* and only Potentate . . . *whom no man hath seen, nor can see*" (the First Person, therefore). The same word is applied very frequently to men, as in all our Lord's Beatitudes, "*Blessed* are the poor in spirit," etc., and as in the commendation of the Virgin Mary by Elizabeth, "*Blessed* is she that believed," St. Luke i. 45. Though generally denoting spiritual blessedness, it has a lower application to happiness of circumstance; as in Acts xxvi. 2, "I think myself *happy*, king Agrippa," and 1 Cor. vii. 40, "She is *happier* if she so abide" (a widow) "after my judgment."

The distinction between *εὐλογητός* and *μακάριος* is preserved in Bright and Medd's Latin version of the Book of Common Prayer (1865, Rivington, Londini, Oxonii, Cantabrigiæ). *Benedictus* there represents *εὐλογητός*, and *beatus*, *μακάριος*. In the Latin version put forth in the beginning of Elizabeth's reign (1560) "ad usum Collegiorum Cantabrigiæ, Oxoniæ, Wintoniæ et Etoniæ," the second "*blessed*" of the English Collect is not represented at all. Here are the two versions referred to:—

1560.

Benedicte Deus, qui effecisti ut quæcunque scripta sunt, ad nostram doctrinam scriberentur, concede nobis, ut ita scripturam attente audiamus, legamus, discamus, intelligamus, syncereque observemus, ut per patientiam et consolationem scripturarum retineamus spem vitæ æternæ, quam dedisti nobis in servatore nostro Jesu Christo, cui tecum et sancto Spiritui sit honor et gloria, per omnia secula seculorum. Amen.

1865 (Bright and Medd).

Benedicte Domine, qui effecisti ut tota Sacra Scriptura ad nostram doctrinam scriberetur: Da nobis ita eam audire, legere, meditari, discere, et intus animo suscipere, ut per patientiam et consolationem Verbi sancti tui amplectamur et usque retineamus spem illam *beatam* æternæ vitæ, quam dedisti nobis in Salvatore nostro Jesu Christo. Amen.

character in itself, without glancing at any recognition of it by His creatures. It is very frequently used of men who are endowed by grace with some excellence of character, and is also used of the "blessed hope" of everlasting life, which we are exhorted to "look for," and which is spoken of at the end of the Collect. So that we have in this short prayer a "Blessed Lord" and a "blessed hope," the first being the ground and author of the second, and, as such, called "the God of hope."¹ This first word, thus made to echo again at the end as the keynote of the strain of prayer, is not without its interest.

"Who hast caused *all* holy Scriptures to be written for *our* learning" (or instruction). A glance at the context of the passage, as it stands in the Epistle to the Romans,² will show that the words "all" and "our" are emphatic. The Apostle is urging strong Christians to bear the infirmities of their weaker brethren, and to consent to be involved with them in reproaches for weak and superstitious scrupulosity. Christ Himself, he says, identifying Himself with His disciples, submitted to be involved in the reproaches cast upon them, upon that principle of action which is attributed to Him in the sixty-ninth Psalm; "The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me." But a reader might say, "How are you justified in applying those words of David, written about eleven hundred years before, to enforce upon the Roman Christians a certain principle of duty?" The Apostle's answer is, "I am altogether justified; for 'whatsoever things were written

¹ See Rom. xv. 13. St. Paul here calls God "the God of hope" in connexion with the text which he had just quoted from the prophet Isaiah, which ended ἐπ' αὐτῷ ἐθνή ἐλπιοῦσιν. The rendering this clause, as our translators have done, "in him shall the Gentiles *trust*" (instead of *hope*), breaks the connexion of thought.

² Rom. xv. 3, 4.

aforetime were written for *our* learning.' " As he says in another Epistle, " All these things happened unto them for ensamples : and they are written for *our* admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." ¹ Here then, in this opening of our Collect, the first point brought out respecting Scripture is *its designed pertinence to ourselves*. Written long ages ago, and addressed in the first instance to persons in circumstances in which we can never be placed, the Holy Scriptures yet have an intended reference to our characters, our wants, our trials. I say an intended reference ; and how so ? Not intended, of course, on the part of the human writers ; but most assuredly intended on the part of Him who inspired them. They are " written," says Lord Bacon, " to the thoughts of men, and to the succession of all ages, with a foresight of all heresies, contradictions, differing estates of the church, yea, and particularly of the elect." ² And, accordingly, the first requisite for

¹ 1 Cor. x. 11.

² I subjoin the entire passage, which is a noble one : " But the two latter points, known to God and unknown to man, touching the secrets of the heart, and the successions of time, do make a just and sound difference between the manner of the exposition of the Scriptures, and all other books. For it is an excellent observation which hath been made upon the answers of our Saviour Christ to many of the questions which were propounded to him, how that they are impertinent to the state of the question demanded ; the reason whereof is, because not being like man, which knows man's thoughts by his words, but knowing man's thoughts immediately, he never answered their words, but their thoughts : much in the like manner it is with the Scriptures, which being written to the thoughts of men, and to the succession of all ages, with a foresight of all heresies, contradictions, differing estates of the church, yea, and particularly of the elect, are not to be interpreted only according to the latitude of the proper sense of the place, and respectively towards that present occasion whereupon the words were uttered, or in precise congruity or contexture with the words before or after, or in contemplation of the principal scope of the place ; but have in themselves, not only totally or collectively, but distributively in clauses and words, infinite springs and streams of doctrine to water the church in every part :

profiting by them is, that he who reads should recognise this designed pertinence of them to himself; should, when he takes them up, feel that his circumstances and needs have been foreseen by the Divine Inspirer, and that somewhere in this volume is a message addressed to himself, which he should pray may find him out in the depths of his heart and conscience. "*All*" of them, however remote in point of date, God caused to be "written for" *his* "instruction."

"Grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them." The different verbs, you observe, are so arranged as to give the idea of a gradual progress from a superficial acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures to the profoundest reception of them in the inner man. The exhortation to the candidates in "the Form and Manner of Ordering of Priests," "that, by *daily reading and weighing* of the Scriptures, ye may wax riper and stronger in your Ministry," conveys the same general idea, without giving so many steps of the process. "Hearing" and "reading" are referred to separately, which perhaps we may regard as an historical note, indicating the date of the composition. For, at the time when this Collect was drawn up, the case was a very common one indeed of those who, while they could "hear" the Scriptures read, could not (either from want of education, or from scarcity of Bibles) "read" them for themselves. Those were days, which we now know only

and therefore, as the literal sense is, as it were, the main stream or river, so the moral sense chiefly, and sometimes the allegorical or typical, are they whereof the church hath most use: not that I wish men to be bold in allegories, or indulgent or light in allusions; but that I do much condemn that interpretation of the Scripture, which is only after the manner as men use to interpret a profane book."

Bacon's "Advancement of Learning," Book II. "Works," vol. i. pp. 127, 128. [London, 1765.]

by the representations of them in pictures and engravings, when the people of the parish, stimulated partly by curiosity to know its contents, partly by a sincere desire for some acquaintance with God's Word, gathered around the lectern in the Church, to which the great black letter Bible was chained, and listened to the reading of it by the village schoolmaster, or any one who happened to be a scholar among them. Our "hearing" of the Scriptures nowadays is mostly confined to hearing them read in the Church Service; and how listless, alas! has that hearing become, when it might be a real means of grace, if, on the one hand, the reader tried to make it so, and, on the other, the hearers made an effort to attend, either by following the reader in their Bibles, or by studying the lessons privately before coming to Church.—The word "mark," indicates simple attention to what is read; and it is closely connected with the next word "learn," inasmuch as marking leads on to learning; it is only by marking that we can learn to any purpose. The Scriptures, in order to their due operation, must be lodged in the memory ("Thy word have I hid in my heart,¹ that I might not sin against thee"); and there is no way of lodging them in the memory so effectual as by reading them over and over again with one's attention strung up to the exercise.—But if we are duly to profit by them, another and more difficult mental effort must follow upon attention; a mental effort for which attention prepares the way and lays the foundation—*thought*. It is thought by which we compare Scripture with Scripture, raise difficulties and solve them, and answer such questions as these, "How can this passage be of practical service to me? How may it warn me against my dangers, guide me in

¹ In my heart have I hoarded thy promise.—DR. KAY. Ps. cxix. 11.

my perplexities, comfort me in my troubles, strengthen my faith, animate my hope, enlarge my sympathies?" This latter kind of thought stands to the mind in the same relation in which the faculty of digestion does to the body,—it is the means by which nourishment is assimilated and made to recruit the frame. And so our Reformers have called it with an admirable appropriateness "inward digestion"—"Grant that we may in such wise *inwardly digest* them." The word *digest* does not occur in our Authorised Translation of the Bible (whether or not because medical science among the Jews did not know much about the animal process so called, I cannot say); but there are several passages which give the idea of God's Word as spiritual nourishment: "Thy words were found, and I did eat them;"¹ "Son of man, eat this roll. . . . So I opened my mouth, and he caused me to eat that roll . . . Then did I eat it; and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness;"² "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!"³ How beautifully is the craving of the spiritual appetite after God's Word set forth in that passage from the Psalms! And we may remind ourselves that, as in the bodily frame there can be no digestion without previous appetite, so there can be no real profiting by the Scriptures, no conversion of them into spiritual nourishment, without a previous hungering for the bread of life and thirsting for the water of life, which God ministers in and through them. Oh, that with every one of us the petition "Give us this day our daily bread" might be the expression of this spiritual appetite! May we ask God in that petition to distribute to us day by day, in our hearing or reading of the Scriptures, that portion of

¹ Jer. xv. 16.

² Ezek. iii. 1, 2, 3.

³ Ps. cxix. 103.

spiritual food which is suitable to our needs, and “convenient for us”!¹

And now in the close of the Collect is brought out its significance in connexion with the Ecclesiastical Season ;—“that by patience, and comfort of thy holy Word, we may embrace, and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life.” The words “blessed hope” are taken from the second Chapter of St. Paul’s Epistle to Titus, where they are closely associated with the Saviour’s Second Advent ; “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” The “blessed hope” cannot be fully realised before “the glorious appearing.” “Patience” should have a comma after it, as is the case in most editions of the Prayer Book ; for, in several MSS.² of the Epistles (some of them early ones), the mind of the reader seems invited to pause upon the word “patience,” by the repetition of the preposition,—“that we, through patience, and through comfort of the scriptures, might have hope.” Nevertheless, the patience and the comfort are intimately connected. The “patience” is “the patient waiting for Christ,” into which St. Paul prays that the hearts of the Thessalonians may be directed,³ the patience “unto the coming of the Lord” to which St. James exhorts.⁴ The “comfort” is that assurance of His coming, and of its nearness to us, which the Scriptures so often give, and by which they confirm and quicken our hope. Old Simeon, who waited “for the consolation of

¹ See Prov. xxx. 8.

² The Codex Bezae (at Cambridge, latter end of the fifth, or earlier part of the sixth, century), the Codex Boreeli (at Utrecht, so called from John Boreel, Dutch ambassador at the court of James I.,—supposed to be of the ninth century), and all the more recent MSS., give a second *διὰ* (through).—Dean Alford’s Greek Testament.

³ See 2 Thess. iii. 5.

⁴ See James v. 7, 8.

Israel,"¹ Joseph of Arimathea, "who also himself waited for the kingdom of God,"² had the hope of the First Advent nourished in them by the Scriptures of the Old Testament. And we, by the use of the whole Sacred Volume, must have the hope of the Second Advent nourished and confirmed in us. And thus the subject of this Collect, if given in full, is *the right use of Holy Scripture, as a means of preparing for the (Second) Advent.*

What an appropriate and seasonable, as well as what a precious prayer! Unlike most Collects, it is not explicitly offered through the Mediator, although, of course, that is implied.³ A different turn is given to the conclusion, which runs not as usual, "*through* Jesus Christ our Lord," but "*in* our Saviour Jesus Christ." This, like the invocation, is peculiar to this Collect, and is a very significant variation on the ordinary formula. "The hope which thou hast given us *in* our Saviour Jesus Christ;"—yes; the hope is all bound up in Him and in His work for us—apart from Him the hope is the baseless fabric of a dream. And therefore, when God is called "our Saviour" by St. Paul, the Lord Jesus Christ is called in the same sentence "our hope;"⁴ His return (after preparing a place for His people), to take them to Himself, being the Christian's great point of hope in the future; for "Christ in you," as the same Apostle says to the Colossians, is "the hope of glory."⁵ And it is a hope which steadies us amidst the storms of life, when our barks are tossed on "the waves of this troublesome

¹ See St. Luke ii. 25.

² See St. Mark xv. 43, and St. Luke xxiii. 51.

³ See above, the Appendix to Book II. Part II. Chap. I., "On the Terminations of the Collects," etc. (p. 94).

⁴ See 1 Tim. i. 1.

⁵ See Col. i. 27.

world ;”¹ “ which hope we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil ; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”²

Thus, in one of the Advent Collects, the usual expression of *faith* in Christ with which our prayers are closed, is most appropriately exchanged for an expression of *hope* in Him. For the grace of hope is pre-eminently the Advent grace. I really know not whether most to admire the intellectual dexterity, or the profound spiritual wisdom, displayed in this prayer.

¹ See the first Prayer in “The Ministration of Publick Baptism of Infants.”

² Heb. vi. 19, 20.

CHAPTER III.

THE THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

¶ Lord Jesu Christ, who at thy first coming didst send thy messenger to prepare thy way before thee; Grant that the ministers and stewards of thy mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready thy way, by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at thy second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in thy sight, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

THIS is the first of four Collects, which were drawn up in connexion with the Savoy Conference in 1661, the other three being the Collects for St. Stephen's Day, for the sixth Sunday after the Epiphany, and for Easter Even. A glance at these four prayers shows that they are all struck from the same die, and that the author (probably it was Cosin, Bishop of Durham; at all events his name stood at the head of the Commission appointed to revise the Book of Common Prayer)¹ followed as his model rather the Collects framed at the Reformation in 1549 than those of the early Office books. These Collects, like those of the Reformation, are longer and fuller than the earlier ones; unity of idea is not so much studied in them; all of them cite the words of Holy Scripture, instead of making covert allusions to it. In asserting this, however, I would by no means be understood to disparage the earlier Collects. It is quite possible to quote Scripture glibly

¹ See the names of the Committee above, Book I. Chap. IX. p. 65, note 1.

and readily without having any real knowledge of it. Sunday-school children are too often an example of this. They can say off by rote a hundred texts, to not one of which have they given a moment's thought. The sound of the text is in their ears, but the sense of it is not in their minds. And, on the other hand, it may happen (and no doubt it was so with the early Collect writers, judging from the evidence which their Collects furnish), that a man's mind shall be so saturated with the sentiments of Scripture that, without directly using Bible phrases, he suggests to a well-instructed reader of what he writes several passages of God's inspired Word.¹ And this is what the primitive prayer-writers do. They do not repro-

¹ In confirmation of this I quote an author, with whom in this point I entirely concur ; while on most other theological subjects I must not only disavow, but earnestly repudiate, the views he has thought it right to put forth :—

“I take the second Collect, for Peace—‘O God, who art the author of peace and lover of concord, in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life, whose service is perfect freedom—’ I need go no further ; what strikes me as the common characteristic of all the prayers is here—how unconsciously full they are of the Bible, and of the best parts of the Bible. I will only point out this one characteristic in this one prayer : ‘O God, who art the author of peace.’ Now ‘peace’ occurs no less than twelve times in the Epistles of St. Paul in a similar connexion ; and if there is one word associated more than another with the thought of God in the New Testament, it is that of peace. Now, I venture to say that the people who wrote this, ‘O God, who art the author of peace,’ never thought of any particular text at all, but were simply impregnated with certain powerful characteristics of Bible thought, and when they spoke of God their first idea was that He gave peace to the storm-tossed, and wretched, and worn out with care ; truce to the strife of fightings within, and truce to fightings without. He was the Author of peace and Lover of concord. He made men ‘to be of one mind in a house.’ ‘He was the God of peace who bruised Satan under their feet,’ ‘the very God of peace who sanctified them wholly,’ ‘the God of peace that brought again from the dead the Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep,’ ‘the Author of peace and the Lover of concord !’ ”

Rev. H. R. Haweis's “Speech in Season” [London, 1874], pp. 145, 146.

duce Scripture verbally, but after digesting it and passing it through the alembic of their own minds.

Our Collect was substituted by Cosin and his colleagues for a much shorter and quite unobjectionable one, in which our Lord was besought to "give ear to our prayers," and "by" His "gracious visitation" to "lighten the darkness of our heart."¹ The great merit of the new Collect is that it introduces a new idea, which is not only most valuable in itself, but also carries on, and beautifully dovetails in with, the train of thought which runs through the series of Advent Collects. In the *first* Collect we pray God to give us grace to prepare ourselves for the dawn of the Second Advent on this benighted world, in the way prescribed in His Word, "by casting away the works of darkness and putting upon us the armour of light."² But if we would make this preparation successfully, we must use the means which God gives us of making it. The first means is Holy Scripture, which, rightly used, will fortify us with patience until the Advent, and give us comfort in the hope of its appearing. This, therefore, is the subject of the *second* Collect. And what other means are given us of preparing for the second Advent? The Christian ministry rightly exercised; to which, moreover, our thoughts are drawn by the fact that the third week in Advent is an Ember week, in preparation for the fourth Sunday, on which Holy Orders are

¹ Here is the Collect with the original of which it is a translation:—

Sarum Missal.

Aurem tuam, quæsumus, Domine,
precibus nostris accomoda: et
mentis nostræ tenebras gratiâ tuæ
visitationis illustra. Per Dominum.

*Translation in King Edward's
first Prayer Book (1549).*

Lord, we beseech thee, give ear
to our prayers, and by thy gracious
visitation lighten the darkness of
our heart, by our Lord Jesus Christ.

² See Rom. xiii. 12.

administered, and labourers sent forth into the Lord's vineyard. This, then, is the great fundamental thought of the *third* Collect,—that one means of preparing for the Second Advent is the Christian ministry rightly exercised, as another is the Holy Scriptures rightly used.

But another grand and most edifying idea is embodied in this Collect. I doubt not it was an idea thrown out by some of the old theologians long before Cosin's time, though I do not know in the writings of which of the Fathers it first made its appearance. The idea is that Christian ministers are called to be pioneers of the Second Advent, clearing the way, and preparing the minds of the people for the Lord's appearing in glorious majesty, as St. John the Baptist cleared the way for His appearing in great humility. It is a great thought indeed, and opens out several important and edifying views of the ministerial office, and of the spirit in which it should be exercised. For nothing was St. John the Baptist more remarkable than for putting Christ forward, while he himself retired into the shade. He claimed only to be an index-finger pointing to the atoning Lamb of God—nothing more for a moment. When he was asked, "What sayest thou of thyself?" he said, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness."¹ I am a voice. A voice offers nothing to the eye, nothing to look upon; it is merely an articulate sound, conveying an idea to the understanding, giving a notice, or an instruction, or a direction, or a warning. John never professed to be anything more. He pointed out Christ to his disciples as "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world;"² and when those who heard him speak followed Jesus, and conversed with Him, John's function to them was at an end. They had been

¹ St. John i. 22, 23.

² See St. John i. 29, 36.

led to the Bridegroom of souls by John's ministry; and thenceforth John, who had previously been an index-finger and a voice, fell back into the relation of the Bridegroom's friend, one who stood and heard Him, and rejoiced greatly at the sound of His voice.¹ And such, too, should be the character of Christian ministers; they should fasten the minds and hearts of the people on their Master and not on themselves. "We preach not ourselves," says St. Paul, "but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake."² This text, indeed, is not cited in the Collect, but another text is, which, when viewed in connexion with its context, conveys a similar estimate of the ministerial office. "Grant," it is said, "that the *ministers* and *stewards* of thy mysteries." Now pray observe the connexion in which those words occur in the First Epistle to the Corinthians. St. Paul is not in that passage magnifying his office, or exalting its prerogatives and dignities. On the contrary, he is inculcating upon the Corinthians not to "glory in men,"³ not to "think of" any ministers of Christ (even though inspired) "above that which is written."⁴ Paul, and Apollos, and Cephas, he says, are nothing more than instruments to bring people to Christ, and through Christ to God;—"let a man so account of us as of the *ministers* of Christ;"⁵ the stress should be laid on the word *ministers*, which, according to the derivation of the Greek word in the original,⁶ means a rower in a galley, who takes the time from an officer appointed to give it, and receives his orders from the captain of the ship. "We, Christian ministers," he would say, "are only rowers in the Church's galley; our Captain who gives us our orders, our Officer who gives us

¹ See St. John iii. 29.

² 2 Cor. iv. 5.

³ See 1 Cor. iii. 21.

⁴ See 1 Cor. iv. 6.

⁵ 1 Cor. iii. 22, and iv. 1.

⁶ ὑπηρέτης.

the time by His voice or by signs, our Pilot who steers the bark whithersoever He lists, while we only supply the brute force which propels it, is Christ.”—Again; “*stewards of the mysteries of God.*” A steward or housekeeper is only a dispenser of another man’s stores; the stores do not belong to him. Nor do the guests, who are entertained at a banquet, think so much of the skill and thrift of the steward as of the resources and liberality of the host. So Christian ministers are mere stewards, dispensing to Christian people not the inferences and conjectures of their own minds, but the Word and Sacraments of God, with which at their ordination they are solemnly entrusted.—Thus the passage of St. Paul’s Epistle, which the writers of this Collect have woven into it, falls in harmoniously with the comparison which they suggest between St. John the Baptist and Christian ministers, being a passage which, instead of magnifying the ministerial office, entirely subordinates the holders of it to the great Head of the Church, exhibiting them as nothing more than His galley-slaves and housekeepers.

But *how* are Christian ministers to fulfil the office of pioneers for the Second Advent, as John fulfilled it for the First? What must they do, or aim at doing, in order to prepare and make ready the way of the Lord? “By turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just.” This is a quotation which comes in the last resort from the Prophet Malachi. The passage is an unusually solemn one, because it stands at the very close of the canon of the Old Testament, and thus contains the closing accents of Prophecy, the accents which the latest of the prophets left lingering in the ears of the Jewish people, until the First Advent should dawn upon them. Those closing accents assured the people that Messiah

should not come without one to herald His approach. "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and" (this is the work that he shall do) "he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."¹ But where does Malachi say, "He shall turn the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just"? Nowhere in so many words. This clause about turning the hearts of the disobedient is another form of saying, "he shall turn the heart of the children to their fathers." But what authority have we for departing from the very words of the prophet, and substituting an equivalent phrase?² We have the authority—not a very mean one—of the angel Gabriel.³ It is not the seventy Alexandrian translators of the Old Testament,⁴ but an angel (speaking to Zacharias the priest), who has given this turn to the Hebrew text, a turn which is every way instructive to thoughtful minds. It shows us that we are to look for

¹ Mal. iv. 5, 6.

² It is doubted by several commentators whether the words "he shall turn the disobedient to the wisdom of the just," are meant to be the equivalent of "he shall turn the heart of the children to their fathers." (See Webster and Wilkinson's Greek Testament.) If they are not, we must take them simply as the angel's own description of the effects of the Baptist's ministry, his citation from Malachi ending with "the hearts of the fathers to the children."

³ See St. Luke i. 17.

⁴ The Septuagint translation of Malachi iv. 5, is as follows:—

Καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἀποστέλλω ὑμῖν
Ἐλίαν τὸν θεσβίτην, πρὶν ἔλθειν
ἡμέραν κυρίου τὴν μεγάλην καὶ
ἐπιφανῆ. Ὅς ἀποκαταστήσει καρδίαν
πατρὸς πρὸς υἱόν, καὶ καρδίαν
ἀνθρώπου πρὸς τὸν πλησίον αὐτοῦ,
μή ἔλθω καὶ πατάξω τὴν γῆν ἄρδην.

And, behold, I send unto you
Elias the Tishbite, before the
coming of the great and glorious
day of the Lord; who shall restore
the heart of father to son, and the
heart of a man to his neighbour, lest
I come and smite the earth utterly.

something very much deeper in the whole passage than a mere domestic reconciliation among the Jews, to be brought about by the ministry of Elijah. It means something far beyond this; "Fathers and children will have quarrelled; but the coming Elijah shall make peace between them." The "fathers" are the forefathers of the Jews, the godly Jews of olden time, Abraham, Moses, David, and the rest, who desired to see the things which Christ's disciples saw, but did not see them. Their descendants at the time of Christ—Pharisees, Sadducees, and the rest—were a degenerate race, altogether unworthy of so noble an ancestry. But the coming of John in the spirit and power of Elijah should do for them—what I cannot doubt Elijah himself in his own person will one day do for modern unbelieving Jews—turn the hearts of the children to the fathers, *i.e.* lead them round to the view of things which their ancestors took;¹ or, to adopt the archangel's beautiful paraphrase, will "turn the hearts of the disobedient" (here, perhaps, the word should be rather rendered "unbelieving")² "to the wisdom of the just," give them that insight into the meaning of their own Scriptures, that wisdom to see Christ in them, which their forefathers, the old righteous Jews, had. And these forefathers, supposed to be a "great cloud of witnesses,"³ looking upon their

¹ Dean Alford seems to think (see his Greek Testament *in loc.*) that if the above were the meaning of the text, the words "fathers" and "children" would have the definite article in the Greek,—τῶν πατέρων ἐπὶ τὰ τέκνα, instead of, (as it is) πατέρων ἐπὶ τέκνα. The Greek, however, being intended as a translation of the Hebrew, must mean whatever the Hebrew does; and Dr. Pusey, in his "Commentary on the Minor Prophets," seems to have no doubt that the interpretation given above is the true one.

² It is, however, rendered "disobedient" in the other five instances of its occurrence in the New Testament (Acts xxvi. 19; Rom. i. 30; 2 Tim. iii. 2; Tit. i. 16, and iii. 3). Ἀπειθής is a word confined to St. Luke and St. Paul.

³ See Heb. xii. 1.

descendants from the realm of departed spirits, and seeing symptoms of their turning round to faith and obedience, will yearn with their hearts over their children, once lost to them, now found, and go forth towards them with the whole strength of revived affection, as the father in the parable went forth to meet the returning prodigal.

Such is, I believe, the original meaning of the words cited. But what do they mean in the application of them made by the Collect to Christian ministers, as pioneers of the Second Advent? "The disobedient," in this application of the words, are of course those Gentiles who, while they have been admitted into covenant with God by Baptism, are yet unbelieving, and therefore disobedient. It is by the opening the eyes of these people to the evil and danger of sin, and to the freeness and fulness of Christ's redemption; in short, by bringing them to the knowledge of God in Christ, which is "the wisdom of the just," and giving them "the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him,"¹ that Christian ministers will fulfil the pioneer's office, and prepare and make ready the Lord's way in the hearts of men.

We have been so taken up with the thoughts in the body of the Collect that we have hitherto passed over its opening, which yet challenges particular observation. "O Lord Jesu Christ." Of all our present Collects only three (the present one, with that for St. Stephen's Day, and that for the First Sunday in Lent) are addressed to our Blessed Lord. In the Missal of Sarum also, three Collects were thus addressed,—those for the First, Third,

¹ See Eph. i. 17.

and Fourth Sundays in Advent. And even the last of these, that for the Fourth Sunday in Advent, as it appears in the Sacramentary of Gelasius,¹ was addressed to the Father. There was a reason for this rarity of address to the Saviour in the Collects used at the Holy Communion, which we give in the words of Canon Liddon ("The Divinity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," 8th Edition, London, 1878. Appendix, Note F, p. 528): "Certainly, in the greatest public act of Christian worship, the Eucharist, the rule was, as defined at Carthage, to address prayer to the Father. This rule, however, resulted from the specific belief of the ancient Church respecting the Eucharist, namely, that it was a sacrificial presentation of Christ, once for all sacrificed on Calvary, to the Eternal Father." Nor does this view at all involve the doctrine of Transubstantiation, or anything akin to it. In the Eucharist we make the solemn memorial of Christ's death, before God as well as man, pleading the merits of His sacrifice with the Father by the prescribed action of breaking bread and pouring out wine, just as in word we plead it, when we offer our prayers in the Name of Jesus Christ. The essentially sacrificial character of the Eucharist, then,

¹ Here are the two versions of the Collect for the Fourth Sunday in Advent side by side :—

Sarum Missal.

(Col. 40. Ed. Burntisland : Londonii. 1861.)

Excita, quæsumus, Domine, potentiam tuam, et veni, et magna nobis virtute succurre, ut auxilium gratiæ tuæ, quod nostra peccata præpediunt, indulgentia tuæ propitiationis acceleret. Qui vivis.

Sacrament. Gelasianum.

(Mur. Tom. I. Col. 680.)

Excita, Domine, potentiam tuam ; et magna nobis virtute succurre : ut per auxilium gloriæ tuæ, quod nostra peccata præpediunt, indulgentia tuæ propitiationis acceleret. Per.

is the cause of the infrequency of direct addresses to Christ in the service of the Holy Communion. But every rule has its exceptions. The Church before the Reformation had three Communion Collects, as our own Prayer Book has three, addressed directly to our Blessed Lord. And these, and the numerous other invocations of Christ which are found elsewhere in our Prayer Book,¹ are to be regarded as definite dogmatic assertions, on the part of the Church, of the Divinity of our Lord and Saviour. We do homage to Him thus, by way of professing our faith in His Divine Sonship. It is to His Personality, be it observed, that the homage is done. And there is in Christ but one Personality, which is Divine, though there are two whole and perfect natures, the Divine and the human. And if any man should presume to say that human nature (being a creature of God) cannot be even in Christ a legitimate object of worship, the answer is that by the Word's taking flesh "*the Godhead and Manhood were joined together never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God, and very Man.*" (Art. II.) And because of this close union, His "Manhood" (as Dr. Liddon says) "rightly and necessarily shares in the adoration offered to His Deity."

What follows in the Collect is seen, when carefully looked at, to be another affirmation of our Lord's Divinity. "Who at thy first coming didst send thy messenger to prepare thy way before thee." This is a citation from the book of the Prophet Malachi, with the very same alteration of the phraseology, which our Lord Himself in the first and third Gospels expressly sanctions (see St. Matt. xi. 10; St. Luke vii. 27) and which the Holy Spirit, speaking by St. Mark (i. 2), sanctions also. The prophet's

¹ Canon Liddon gives an exhaustive list of them, pp. 522-524.

words are those of Christ Himself; "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before ME." "He who speaks" (says Dr. Pusey in his "Commentary on the Minor Prophets") "is He who should come, God the Son. . . . He speaks here in His Divine Nature, as the Lord Who should send, and Who should Himself come in our flesh. In the Gospel, when He *was* come in the flesh, He speaks not of His own Person, but of the Father, 'since indescribable are the operations of the Trinity, and what the One doth, the other Two do, since the Three are of one nature, power, and operation.' " Accordingly, our Lord, in quoting the words of the Prophet, puts them into the mouth of the Father, by a change of the pronouns; "Behold, I send my messenger before THY face, which shall prepare THY way before THEE" (St. Matt. xi. 10). "This is," says Dean Alford, "if such were needed, no mean indication of His own eternal and co-equal Godhead." It is well that so early in the series of the Collects we should meet with an affirmation so explicit of the doctrine of our Lord's Divinity, which is a mainstay of our faith, since the power, efficacy, and meritoriousness of His atoning work are bound up with it. And how beautifully does the act of adoration at the end of the Collect chime in with the assertion of His Deity in the early part, when we formally ascribe to Him His place in the ever-blessed Trinity; "who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end."

CHAPTER IV.

THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

O Lord, raise up (we pray thee) thy power, and come among us, and with great might succour us; that whereas, through our sins and wickedness, we are sore let and hindered in running the race that is set before us, thy bountiful grace and mercy may speedily help and deliver us, through the satisfaction of thy Son our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

Excita, quaesumus, Domine, potentiam tuam, et veni, et magna nobis virtute succurre, ut auxilium gratiae tuae, quod nostra peccata praepediunt, indulgentia tuae propitiationis acceleret. Qui vivis. (*Miss. Sar. Col. 40.*) And see, on the preceding Collect, p. 130, n. 1.

IN the first two Collects of Advent we have seen the work of the English Reformers; in the third the work of the Revisers of 1662. The Collect for the fourth Sunday is the first in the series which is translated from the old Latin Offices. And it is, or perhaps I should say it was, when first made, nearly a literal translation. The additions to the original we will note as we go along.

“O Lord, raise up (we pray thee) thy power.” The words are those of the eightieth Psalm, and we will glance at them in their original context. “Thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth. Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh *stir up thy strength*” (the words used in the Vulgate, or Latin translation of the

Scriptures, are exactly the same which the translators have here rendered "*Raise up thy power*"), "and come and save us." Let us not overlook the interesting reference to the order of Israel's march in the wilderness. The three tribes descended from Rachel marched immediately in the rear of the ark. In front of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, the ark was carried by the Kohathites, the curtains and boards of the tabernacle having previously gone forwards under the escort of the Gershonites and Merarites. Hence, if there had been a *literal* shining forth of the Shechinah from between the cherubims, which bent over the ark (which of course there could not be, as the ark was carefully covered up before removal), the glorious light would have flashed full in the faces of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh. Now the Lord Jesus Christ is the true Ark and Mercy-seat, of whom St. John says that "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt" (the original word means "tabernacled,"¹ dwelt in our nature as in a tent, just as the ark of the covenant dwelt in a tent during the pilgrimage of Israel in the wilderness) "among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father)." I suppose St. John, when he wrote those last words, must have been thinking of the Transfiguration, when, in the presence of the three most favoured disciples (shall I call them the Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh of the New Dispensation?), there streamed from the true Ark (*i.e.* the most sacred person of our Saviour) such a light as seemed to illuminate the landscape for miles round. We see then the appropriateness of this passage of the Psalms in connexion with the *First* Advent. But still more appropriate is it, I think, in connexion with the Second. We pray our Lord to

¹ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν. St. John i. 14.

“raise up” His “power, and come among us.” But His First Advent was not in power. He “made Himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”¹ Therefore to say to Him, “Raise up thy power,” is virtually to say, “O thou that camest once in great humility, and wast crucified through weakness,² come again now in thy glorious Majesty; let us see Thee sitting at the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.”³ “And come;” as much as to say, “Come, Lord, in thine own person, and no longer in that of thy messengers the prophets.” This “*come*” has been from a very early period one great keynote of the Church’s Offices immediately before Christmas. From the seventeenth to the twenty-third of December (inclusive) used to be sung a beautiful series of Anthems, each of them praying Christ, under some one or other of His Scriptural designations, to *come* and perform one of His covenant offices for us; “O Wisdom, come to teach;” “O Adonai, come to redeem;” “O Root of Jesse, come to redeem;” “O Key of David, come and deliver the captive;” “O Dayspring from on high, come and illuminate;” “O King of the Gentiles, come and save;” “O Emmanuel, come to save us.” The pulses of the Church’s heart beat quicker with desire and anticipation, as the nearness of the Festival of the First Advent reminds her of the Second, which itself is nearer now than when we believed.⁴ It is to be regretted, in my judgment, that these anthems were not retained in the Reformed Prayer Book, to be sung

¹ Phil. ii. 7, 8.² See 2 Cor. xiii. 4.³ See St. Matt. xxvi. 64.⁴ See Rom. xiii. 11.

perhaps instead of "Venite exultemus" in the week preceding Christmas-day.

"Come *among us*." It is worthy of note that the "among us" was inserted by our Reformers in 1549 in translating the Collect. It does not occur in the original Latin, which has merely, "O Lord, raise up, we pray thee, thy power and come." This insertion is a delicate touch enough; but like the delicate touch of a master hand in an etching, it gives great expression. First, it reminds one of the text already quoted, which may be called the text of the First Advent—"The Word was made flesh and dwelt" (tabernacled) "*among us*."¹ Then, again, there is a warm domestic tone about the "among us," indicative of the Lord's relations to men at His First Advent, which gives a happy glow and colouring to the petition. It leads us to the thought that "the Lord Jesus went in and out among us" for three years, "beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us;"² that He sat by our hearths, walked through our cornfields, was seen in markets and lazar houses, attended our weddings, attended our funerals, and did works of wonder at both. "Among us;" what a good short sermon the words are in themselves! is it not wonderful how much two little words may convey?

"And with great might succour us." In the passage of the Psalm, on which this part of the prayer is founded, the words are, "Stir up thy strength, and come and *save us*."³ Possibly the framers of the Collect may have thought that, if they retained the "save us," the First Advent would have been too exclusively referred to; for it was in His First Advent that our Lord came to save the world, as in His second He will come to judge it.

¹ St. John i. 14.

² Acts i. 21, 22.

³ Ps. lxxx. 2.

Yet, if salvation be used in the sense of salvation *consummated*, this will not be until the Second Advent, according to that word of St. Paul—"unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto *salvation*."¹ Anyhow, the exact Scriptural phrase has been altered by the framers of the Collect to "with great might succour us;" a phrase which rather glances at the Second Coming, for Christ came in weakness when He first came. The thought of both Advents runs through the Advent Collects, now one being uppermost, now the other, and both being interlaced like the woof and warp in a web.

"That whereas, through our sins and wickedness, we are sore let and hindered in running the race that is set before us." This last clause, "in running the race that is set before us," was inserted at the last Review of the Book of Common Prayer in 1662. It furnishes a good instance of the way in which the framers of the Reformed Prayer-Book sought to make the references to Scripture, which already existed in the old Offices, more explicit and unmistakable. The word in the original Latin prayer translated "hindering" expresses an obstruction thrown in the way of the feet. Now it is the feet with which we walk and run. There is, therefore, in the word a *latent* reference to the famous passage to the Hebrews, "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."² This reference Bishop Cosin and his colleagues have made explicit, by inserting the clause "in running the race that is set before us." The imagery, as is well known, is that of the ancient footrace. Only one can win the prize in such a competition.³ And no one who carries a weight in his hand, or has any encumbrance from his raiment, can

¹ Heb. ix. 28.² Heb. xii. 1.³ See 1 Cor. ix. 24.

expect to win. Besetting sin is the encumbering weight, the entangling raiment, which clogs our movements in the heavenward race ; oh ! how entangling and encumbering those can say, who, in their youth having formed a vicious habit, find it next to impossible in their maturer age to break the neck of it. Somehow or other the weight must be laid aside, if we are ever to claim the victor's wreath. Yes ! somehow or other. But the Collect does not leave the method of deliverance thus vague and undefined.

"That thy *bountiful grace and mercy* may speedily help and deliver us." The word "help" was inserted at the last Review, evidently by way of correspondence with the word "grace" in the earlier part of the clause. What we must look to, in order to our being freed from the obstructions of besetting sin, is God's mercy in Christ delivering us from its guilt, and God's grace in Christ helping us against its power. And observe how the word "help" implies our own earnest efforts. No one, in propriety of speech, talks of helping an inanimate object. If a man has dropt his watch or his purse in a ditch, he does not talk of helping it out. But a sheep or a child might be properly said to be helped out, because, if you give them your hand, they can scramble, and make efforts to reach the brink. There is no possibility of being extricated from the quagmire of besetting sin save by our own efforts co-operating with Divine Grace. *Our* Hercules does not lift any waggon out of the rut, unless the waggoner himself applies his shoulder to the wheel, and whips the horses.

"Through the satisfaction of thy Son our Lord." The needful grace and mercy are granted through this satisfaction, embracing under the term "satisfaction," not only the atonement of Christ's death, but also the righteous-

ness of His life,—all the claims of God's law upon sinners, whether for penalty or obedience. This is the beautiful form under which, at the close of our Collect, the close of the second Scriptural passage on which it is founded is presented to us. He that offers prayer through the satisfaction of God's Son our Lord, depending on that alone, is in good truth "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith."¹ And this whole prayer is a looking unto Him, in hope of His Second Advent, and in faith of the benefits brought to us by His First. Those who find themselves "sore let and hindered" in running "the way of His commandments," by inborn corruption or sinful habits, shall, if they patiently wait on Him in faith and hope, in due time find relief. Is it not written, "I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart,"² fill it, that is, with such a sense of joyful freedom and delight in God's service, as shall make obedience a pleasure,—“my yoke easy, and my burden light.”³

For the termination of this Collect the reader is referred to the Appendix to Chap. I. of Part II. Book II., page 105.

¹ Heb. xii. 2.

² Ps. cxix. 32.

³ St. Matt. xi. 30.

CHAPTER V.

CHRISTMAS DAY.

Almighty God, who hast given us thy only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and as at this time to be born of a pure Virgin; Grant that we being regenerate, and made thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit; through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.
(A.D. 1549.)

IN the Missal of Sarum (that is, in the Communion Office of the English Church before the Reformation), provision is made for three masses on Christmas Day—one at cockcrow, one at break of dawn, and one in full day.¹

¹ The Collects for the two first of these masses were as follows :—

Ad Missam *in gallicantu*.

Deus, qui hanc sacratissimam noctem veri luminis fecisti illustratione clarescere : da, quæsumus, ut cujus lucis mysteria in terra cognovimus, ejus quoque gaudiis in cælo perfruamur. Qui tecum.

Ad Missam *in aurora*.

Da, quæsumus, omnipotens Deus, ut qui nova incarnati Verbi tui luce perfundimur : hoc in nostro resplendeat opere quod per fidem fulget in mente. Per eundem.

Missale ad usum Sarum.

[Burntisland, 1861.] Col. 49, 55.

At the Mass *at cockcrow*.

God, who madest this most sacred night to shine with the brightness of the true Light; Grant, we beseech thee, that, as we have known the revelations of the Light upon earth, so we may also have the fruition of his joys in heaven. Who with thee.

At the Mass *at dawn*.

Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, to us upon whom the new light of the Word made flesh is shed forth, that the light which shines by faith in our hearts may also shine brightly in our works. Through the same.

Our present Epistle and Gospel are taken from the third of these masses; and it is not without interest to consider why the Collect was discarded by our Reformers. In an English translation it runs thus; "Grant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that the new birth of thy only-begotten Son through the flesh may set free those, who are held fast by the old bondage under the yoke of sin."¹ Not only is there nothing here superstitious or unsound in doctrine, but the sentiment is beautiful and edifying. Christ was sent by the Father, as He Himself said at the opening of His ministry in Nazareth, to preach deliverance to the captives (of Satan), and to set at liberty them that were bruised² beneath the galling yoke of sin. And the way in which He effected this deliverance was by taking our nature upon Him, yielding obedience in it to the precept of the law, and submitting in it to the curse of the law, which human disobedience had drawn down. But the thought was a little too far-fetched; and on so very high a festival as Christmas a more explicit and palpable reference to the great fact commemorated was thought desirable. Our present Collect, one that does the highest possible credit to the composers, has the one thought of the birth of Christ running throughout it. This birth, it is intimated, must be repeated in the Christian. The experience of Christ our Head must be ours throughout. We too must ascend into heaven ("in heart and mind"³); we too must rise (unto "newness of life"⁴); we too must die ("unto sin"⁵); and, as the be-

¹ The original is as follows :—"Concede, quæsumus, omnipotens Deus, ut nos Unigeniti tui nova per carnem nativitas liberet : quos sub peccati jugo vetusta servitus tenet. Per eundem. Qui tecum." *Miss. Sar.*

² See St. Luke iv. 16, 17, 18.

³ Collect for Ascension Day; and see Eph. ii. 6.

⁴ See Rom. vi. 4.

⁵ See Rom. vi. 10, 11.

ginning of all things, we too must be born again,¹ just as Christ, "begotten of his Father before all worlds,"² underwent a *new* birth in the flesh. Without at all denying the beauty and excellence of the Pre-Reformation Collect, surely we can see that we are gainers by the exchange.

"Almighty God, who hast given us thy only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and as at this time to be born of a pure Virgin." In the original draught of the Collect the words had stood thus; "*this day* to be born of a pure Virgin." Cosin, at the last revision, substituted "*as at this time* to be born;"—a minute alteration, but not an insignificant one. For, not to speak of the uncertainty whether Christmas Day is the real historical anniversary of our Lord's birth, learned men differing very much as to the exact period of the year at which He was born,—"*this time*" reminds us, as "*this day*" would not do, that the Lord appeared exactly when, in the counsels of Eternal Wisdom, the time was ripe for His appearing, when the period long anticipated in the designs of God and in the hopes of His Church had arrived;—"when *the fulness of the time* was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman."³

Observe, "His Son, made of a woman." He was God's Son then, before He was born, or "made of a woman;" God's Son, not only as "conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary;" but as begotten of the Father before all time. The somewhat peculiar phraseology of the old Collect indicated this very pointedly by speaking of our Lord's "new birth through the flesh;" if our Lord had a *NEW birth* through the flesh, then, before He appeared in the flesh, He must have been (as Scripture inti-

See St. John iii. 3, 5.

² Nicene Creed.

³ Gal. iv. 4.

mates that He was) begotten from everlasting of the Father.¹ And thus is established a second point of similarity between the Head and the members; the Son was begotten from everlasting of the Father before He was born of the Virgin; the members have a natural birth according to the flesh, and a new birth of water and the Spirit, transacted in the laver of regeneration. If any man ask the ground of the relationship which subsisted eternally between the First and Second Persons of the Blessed Trinity, all we can say, with our present limited understanding, is (what has been said by an eminently devout and thoughtful person of our own day), that there is no form of goodness of which God is not the fountain, and which is not to be found within the precinct of His nature; that, unquestionably, trust, veneration, submission, and so forth, are forms of goodness; that these and similar forms of goodness must therefore be represented in the nature of God, and that they are so represented in the distinct Personality of the Son. And if any man ask the practical value of this doctrine of Christ's eternal generation, I say that, without this doctrine, we should not have the same assurance of God's exceeding great love towards us. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."² Parents know what it is to give up a child,—how it wrings their hearts to part with him even to fair prospects and a bright future. But to part with a child on an enterprise, which can only end in a hard life, an agonizing struggle, a cruel and shameful death—how dear must any object be to a father's heart, for which he consents to make such a sacrifice as this! And this,—the sacrifice, if I may so say, not of a Person in the Godhead

¹ See St. John i. 18.² St. John iii. 16.

unconnected with Him, but of a Son—a Son in affection, in dutifulness, in confidence—is exactly the sacrifice which has been made for each one of us. But this Divine Son, who stood from all eternity in the relation of a Son, and exemplified from all eternity the virtues of sonship, had a “NEW birth through the flesh”—a birth of a pure virgin. By means of this birth He, as the Collect reminds us, took our nature upon Him, so as to establish between ourselves and Him a perfect sympathy. And it should not be overlooked that this nature was taken from the tenderer side of humanity, that it was drawn out of a mother, and that no human father shared in its generation. The Seed of the woman, though Himself a man, was thus endued with woman’s tenderness, compassion, and patient endurance; and qualified, more abundantly than would otherwise have been the case, to have compassion on the ignorant and on them that are out of the way. This is a point too apt to be overlooked, when we are speaking or thinking of Christ’s birth of the Virgin.

“Grant that we being regenerate, and made thy children by adoption and grace.” Our Reformers clung to the ancient and universal phraseology of the Church from the earliest times, in representing all the baptized as regenerate, and made God’s children by adoption and grace. Our Blessed Lord speaks of baptism as a birth of water and of the Spirit.¹ In *His own* “new birth” the Spirit operated, inasmuch as He was “conceived by the Holy Ghost;” but there was also a human and earthly instrument employed in producing the effect—“a pure Virgin.” Similarly the Spirit is the prime agent in *our* new birth; but there is also a human and earthly instrument which the Spirit condescends to employ—pure

¹ See St. John iii. 5.

water.—“Made thy children by adoption and grace.” By “grace” here is not meant, according to the popular conception of the word, an influence upon the mind of man, but simply free favour. It was a free favour that God gave His Son to take upon Him the nature common to all mankind, and in that nature “to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness.”¹ It is a free favour to individuals that they are born in a Christian land, and have the merits of Christ applied to them by the Sacrament of Baptism, and receive the motions of His Spirit with the earliest dawn of consciousness. But let it not be imagined for a moment that this is all, or anything more than the beginning of, the work of our sanctification. Too often the vital spark communicated in Baptism is overlaid and smothered by neglect of religious education on the part of parents, and by frivolities and follies and youthful lusts on the part of the baptized. In that case the spark which has been, it may be, latent and never quite extinct, must be made to burst forth vividly and brilliantly from the embers of worldliness and sensuality, under which it has long smouldered. This process is often called conversion; but, strictly speaking, it is but the beginning of the work so called, and needs to be carried on and perfected. It would probably be better to call it renewal, and thus to cling as closely as possible to the phraseology of Scripture—“the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.”² It is interesting to observe how studiously this work of “renewing” is spoken of as mental, as a process upon the conscience, heart, and moral powers. The new birth, like natural birth, is something done upon us,—a process exter-

¹ Dan. ix. 24.² Titus iii. 5, 6.

nal to ourselves, in which we are patients rather than agents. Renewal, on the other hand, is a work done in us and with us ; by the Spirit, indeed, as the prime Mover in it, but still with the full and hearty co-operation of our own wills. And hence we have such exhortations as these—"Be renewed *in the spirit of your mind* ;"¹ "Be ye transformed *by the renewing of your mind* ;"²—texts, in which both the internal character of renewal, and the power of the human will co-operating with the Holy Spirit to bring it about, are clearly recognised. In the latter of them is wrapped up another lesson on the nature of renewal. The word rendered "transformed" is the same which is used in the Gospels to denote our Saviour's Transfiguration ; for, indeed, renewal is mental and spiritual transfiguration. The features and person of the Saviour underwent no change in the Transfiguration ; but were simply illuminated by a strong light which burst forth from within Him, so that they were rendered transparent, and seemed no longer lineaments of flesh and blood. Similarly the moral and intellectual structure of an individual is not altered in renewal ; but every part of it is irradiated with the light of grace ; it is the same natural character made heavenly, or, in other words, "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."³

And last, not least, renewal is a process so far from being achieved at once that it must go on daily,—"*may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit* ;" "*though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.*"⁴ It is analagous to that gradual replacement of old particles of matter by new ones, which is ever going on in the process of natural growth by means of food, exercise,

¹ Eph. iv. 23.

² Rom. xii. 2.

³ See Col. i. 12.

⁴ 2 Cor. iv. 16.

and the inhaling of air. It is a process imperceptible at the moment, and capable of being discerned only by the comparison of one period with another. And since, in all healthy spiritual growth, the process of renewal goes on daily, it might be at bed-time a suitable question for self-examination whether, during the day past, our inward man has been renewed ; whether this day we have received and digested the heavenly manna of God's Word ; whether we have practised real prayer, the one exercise of the spiritual life ; and whether we have breathed, or even sought to breathe, the free fresh atmosphere of communion with God.

CHAPTER VI.

ST. STEPHEN'S DAY.

Grant, O Lord, that, in all our sufferings here upon earth for the testimony of thy truth, we may steadfastly look up to heaven, and by faith behold the glory that shall be revealed ; and, being filled with the holy Ghost, may learn to love and bless our persecutors by the example of thy first Martyr Saint Stephen, who prayed for his murderers to thee, O blessed Jesus, who standest at the right hand of God to succour all those that suffer for thee, our only Mediator and Advocate. Amen.

THIS Collect, though the nucleus of it exists in the old Latin Offices, had so many new ideas imported into it by the Revisers of 1662, that they may fairly be called the authors of it.

The implication that we may suffer nowadays for the testimony of God's truth ; the happy idea that we may behold with the eyes of faith the same glory which Stephen beheld with those of sight ; the reference not only to the martyr's dying prayer, but to the power which enabled him to offer it, " he being filled with the Holy Ghost ;" the direct invocation of the Lord Jesus at the end of prayer ; the notice of the fact that He appeared standing to St. Stephen, and the suggested explanation of it—all these are new ; the prayer for grace to imitate St. Stephen's example in loving even our enemies, forms the

whole of the comparatively meagre Collect which is found in the Missal of Sarum.¹

This meagre Collect, which is the nucleus of the present one, runs as follows, in Cranmer's translation of it:—"Grant us, O Lord, to learn to love our enemies by the example of thy martyr Saint Stephin, who prayed to thee for his persecutors: which livest and reignest," etc. The only material point of difference between this and the original is that the Latin Collect is clearly addressed to God the Father, for it speaks of Stephen's praying for his persecutors; "to Jesus Christ, *thy Son*, our Lord." Cranmer addressed it to the Son, by rendering, "Stephen who prayed *to thee* for his persecutors;" and not without reason, for surely it is a feature in the inspired accounts of St. Stephen's martyrdom that he addressed his last prayers to our Lord, thus confessing Him to be God, and also to be the Mediator between God and man. It is appropriate, therefore, that, on the day when we commemorate the martyrdom of Saint Stephen, and also pray for grace to imitate him in his love for his enemies, we should remind ourselves of the testimony which he bore to our Lord in his dying prayers, and imitate him in a direct invocation of the Lord Jesus. Very few of the old Collects were addressed to the Second Person, the reason being that the Holy

¹ This Collect is as follows:—

Da nobis, quæsumus, Domine, imitari quod colimus, ut discamus et inimicos diligere: quia ejus natalitia celebramus, qui novit etiam pro persecutoribus exorare Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum Filium tuum. Qui tecum.

Miss. Sar. Col. 61, 62.

Grant to us, Lord, we beseech thee, so to imitate that which we venerate, that we may learn to love even our enemies, inasmuch as [to-day] we celebrate his eternal birthday, who knew how to intercede even for his persecutors, with Jesus Christ, *thy Son*, our Lord. Who with thee.

Communion (of which the Collect is a variable feature) was regarded as the Christian sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving offered to the Father through the Son;¹ but in this instance we cannot but think that Cranmer showed great tact and discernment in departing from the usual rule, and in directing the invocation to the Second Person.

It is generally said that the Revisers of 1662, at the head of whom was Bishop Cosin, meant the prayer still to be what Cranmer had made it, a direct address to the Second Person throughout. But this is not certain. It *may be* that by the "O Lord," at the opening, is meant Christ; but at the same time it is quite open to us to suppose that the Father is meant, and that only in the concluding clause the Lord Jesus is invoked, the eye of the worshipper seeming to catch His form as He stands, "in fashion as a man," on the right hand of the throne of grace. Indeed this seems to me rather a more interesting view of the prayer than the other; that the worshipper is placing himself in the mental attitude of St. Stephen; that He looks up to the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, and addresses himself to Him who sitteth thereon; and that then, catching sight (as it were) of Jesus standing at the right hand, his address turns aside to the Saviour, as if beseeching Him to second the appeal. It is remarkable how singularly this method of concluding the prayer agrees with the method adopted in the Collect for the Sixth Sunday after Epiphany, another of Cosin's compositions. There the prayer is directly addressed to the Father, and mention of the first and second manifestations of the Son is made in it; but in the close the eye of the worshipper catches the Third Person enthroned by the side of the Two First, and offers homage to each

¹ See above, on Collect for Third Sunday in Advent, pp. 128, 129, 130.

of the Three separately ; “ where with thee, O Father, and thee, O Holy Ghost, he liveth and reigneth, ever one God, world without end.”

“ Grant, O Lord, that in all our sufferings here upon earth for the testimony of thy truth.” These words are no dead letter, even in an age and a country where direct persecution for religious opinions has passed away. As the example of true Christians, quietly and consistently exhibited, cannot but condemn the world (that is, the circle of careless and irreligious people around us, high or low, rich or poor), the world will feel twitted by this implied censure on its ways, and is sure to retaliate by spite, or ridicule, or slander. Somehow or other, it is certain to show its dislike and contempt. Then, too, there is a doctrinal truth, to which testimony has to be borne, and it certainly lies with neither of the extreme parties which divide the Church. By “ thy truth ” in the mouth of Bishop Cosin, who in all probability wrote these words, was doubtless meant the true Church of England doctrine, for which he had contended against Jesuits and Roman priests, when chaplain in France to the Protestant members of Henrietta Maria’s household, and for his faithful adherence to which, as against the narrowness and sourness of Puritan doctrine, and the baldness and bleakness of Puritan worship, he had been ejected from all his preferments, deprived of his means of subsistence, and driven into exile. And even nowadays, although persecution is put down, the offence of the truth has not ceased, and a bold unflinching protest on behalf of it, on whatever side it is impugned, will not fail to involve the protester in some measure of obloquy and contempt. But oh ! according to the widest interpretation of suffering for the testimony of the truth, and giving ourselves every chance

of coming under the description of those who suffer for it, can we say that we have ever suffered anything in this so holy cause? Or, if unpleasant consequences have sometimes attended our taking a right and faithful course, how can such sufferings be accounted as anything, when laid by the side of the persecutions which the holy martyrs endured? It is well that our prayers should involve a profession of the highest standard of Christian virtue, if it were only to put us on a search into our own consciences as to whether we really are what we profess to be.

“We may stedfastly look up to heaven, and by faith behold the glory that shall be revealed.” Several texts are evidently running in the mind of the composer—“Faith is the evidence of things not seen,” the eye of the soul, wherewith we discern such things;¹ “Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen;”² and again, “I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”³ One sees why Cosin has expunged these last words “in us,” because the glory of God which Stephen saw was external to him, not within him. The particular glory of which St. Paul is speaking to the Romans is that which shall be manifested in the mortal body of the Christian, when it shall share in the redemption which has already passed upon the soul. And the relation of this internal glory to the glory which is external, the relation of the change in the vile body to the sight of the glory of God and of Jesus, is very close

¹ Heb. xi. 1.² 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18.³ Rom. viii. 18.

and intimate. Moses' face shone when, and because, he held intercourse with the Lord.¹ "By beholding" (no longer "in a glass darkly," but "face to face") "the glory of the Lord, we shall be changed into the same image,"² our bodies will be fashioned like unto His glorious body by the instrumentality of that single glance. We shall be like Him, simply because we shall see Him as He is.³ The gazing on Him by faith transfigures the soul; the gazing on Him by sight will transfigure the body. It is thus that glory "in us" will flow from glory external to us.

"And, being filled with the holy Ghost, may learn to love and bless our persecutors." The language seems to imply the arduousness of this attainment in Christian virtue, as if the loving and blessing of persecutors could not possibly be achieved without a very large measure of the Spirit's influence. We are reminded of the prayer of the Apostles, when their Lord enjoined them to forgive an erring brother, even if he trespassed against them seven times in a day; "Lord, increase our faith;"⁴ as much as to say, "It is only by a great strengthening of that principle, which lifts man up above the world and the flesh, that we can extend our forgiveness of injuries so far."—"May learn to love." This "learn" is in the original Latin Collect, which Cosin has taken as his nucleus, and has so happily expanded. And the word is very significant. By the help of the Holy Spirit we must discipline ourselves by degrees into the love of those who dislike, insult, and injure us. One method of discipline is by forcing ourselves to pray for them. Another, by not allowing ourselves to speak of their conduct more

¹ See Exod. xxxiv. 29, 30.

² See 2 Cor. iii. 18.

³ See 1 John iii. 2.

⁴ St. Luke xvii. 4, 5.

than is necessary ; for the speaking of a wrong always aggravates and inflames it. A third is by doing definite acts of kindness ; for our acts are always in our control, however little our feelings may be.—“To love and bless.” Better than “love” alone, which is all that the Latin Collect has, if it were only that the reference to the Great Master’s precept is thus made more explicit ; “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you,” to which He adds, “do good to them that hate you,”¹ thus completing the cycle of the precept and making it full-orbed ; for love is a sentiment, blessing a word, and doing good an action. Cosin might have added “do good” to “love and bless,” with some gain to the sense of the Collect, even if there had been some loss to the rhythm.

“By the example of thy first Martyr Saint Stephen, who prayed for his murderers to thee, O blessed Jesus.” “Be ye followers of me,” writes St. Paul, “even as I also am of Christ.”² St. Stephen followed, or was an imitator of, the Lord Jesus in his death, and very faithful he was to his model. When first beneath the impact of the nails His sacred blood was shed, “then said Jesus, Father, forgive them ; for they know not what they do.”³ Stephen’s prayer for his murderers before he fell asleep in Jesus is but an echo of this, “Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.”⁴ We pray for grace to follow Stephen in that particular in which he most remarkably followed Christ.

“Who standest at the right hand of God to succour all those that suffer for thee, our only Mediator and Advocate.” A meditation rather than a prayer ; and perhaps, in a formulary like a Collect, which is so com-

¹ St. Matt. v. 44.

² 1 Cor. xi. 1.

³ St. Luke xxiii. 34.

⁴ Acts vii. 60.

pletely a prayer, as distinct from a self-communing, the taste of introducing such a clause may be questioned ; but surely it is a noble meditation, and a helpful and edifying one. The explanation which it gives of our Lord's appearing on that occasion in a standing posture is most interesting. To have appeared to Stephen sitting might have seemed to betoken a want of interest in his troubles ; it might have been taken to be looking on listlessly, without helping ; therefore the Lord has risen from His throne, as it were, to interfere on his behalf and give him His hand. And is there no sense in which He now appears to the eye of our faith, not sitting but standing ? Surely there is. "We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."¹ No advocate ever sat down to plead ; it is the judge who sits ; the advocate stands erect before him. We all deeply need the Lord's succour in the way of advocacy, if in no other way. And very happily, therefore, the Collect closes with a glance at Christ's function of pleading the cause of His people—"our only Mediator and Advocate."

¹ 1 John ii. 1.

CHAPTER VII.

ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST'S DAY.

Merciful Lord, we beseech thee to cast thy bright beams of light upon thy Church, that it being enlightened by the doctrine of thy blessed Apostle and Evangelist Saint John may so walk in the light of thy truth, that it may at length attain to the light of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Ecclesiam tuam, quaesumus, Domine, benignus illustra, ut beati Iohannis Apostoli tui et Evangelistae illuminata doctrinis, ad dona perveniat sempiterna. Per Dominum. (Miss. Sar. Col. 65.)

THE warmest admirers of the prayers which are found in the old Latin Offices will be ready to admit that the Collect for St. John the Evangelist's Day was greatly improved by the Revisers of 1662; improved by having additional point and a practical turn given to it. The Collect, as literally translated by Cranmer in 1549, ran thus:—"Merciful Lord, we beseech thee to cast thy bright beams of light upon thy Church: that it being lightened by the doctrine of thy blessed Apostle and Evangelist John may attain to thy everlasting gifts: through Jesus Christ our Lord." Comparing this with the Collect as it now stands, we see at once the inferiority of the old to the new. The old Collect had made mention only of two lights, the light of the Spirit and the light of the Word; the new one most aptly introduces a third light, that of glory, or everlasting life, to which the

two first lights are conducive—that is, lead the way. Then, again, the old Collect contained no direct allusion to Christian conduct. It was merely a prayer that God would enlighten us by His Word and Spirit, and did not even insinuate what the new one expresses, that we must walk in the light thus shed upon us from heaven, if we desire to reach His glory. These alterations of the old Latin prayer are masterly touches indeed, which prove Bishop Cosin's abilities as a reviser of Church Offices to have been of the highest order.

We have here, in the first place, a petition for the light of the Spirit. "Merciful Lord, we beseech thee to cast thy bright beams of light upon thy Church," or, as the original is, "Graciously cast thy bright beams of light upon thy Church, O Lord, we beseech thee." There is a peculiar aspect of graciousness about the Levitical benediction, in the two last clauses of which light is mentioned in connection with the Second and Third Persons of the Blessed Trinity: "The LORD bless thee and keep thee: The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The LORD lift up his countenance" (the light of His countenance) "upon thee" (as it were in smiling graciousness), "and give thee peace."¹

Christmas-time (and St. John's Day is one of the satellites which attend upon the high festival of Christmas) is a time of Divine graciousness; it is the season when the Sun of Righteousness rose upon the world with healing in its wings, when the Incarnate God made His face to shine upon His people, and was gracious unto them. And this dawn of Divine graciousness reminds us of that second step in God's union with man, which took place at Pentecost, when the risen and exalted

¹ Num. vi. 24-26.

Saviour shed forth the Spirit on His expectant Church ; or, in other words, when God the Holy Ghost lifted up the light of His countenance upon His people, and gave them peace. But the light of the Holy Spirit is of course from the Father, as it is by and from the Son : He does not come to us independently ; He streams forth from all eternity from the Father ; He reaches sinners through, and is (in time) sent by, the Son. And, accordingly, we are told that "God"—God the Father—"is," in His essential nature, "light ;"¹ and St. Paul says, "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."² There is in this last text no direct mention of the Holy Spirit ; but of course His agency is implied. What can God's shining in our hearts be but the light of the Holy Ghost, which there He sheds abroad ? At Pentecost God issued the same fiat in the world of spirit, which He had long centuries before issued in the world of nature ; "God said, Let there be light : and there was light."³

And do not omit to observe that the blessing is supplicated, not directly for the individual, but for the Church ; "Merciful Lord, we beseech thee to cast thy bright beams of light *upon thy Church*." It is very observable how pointedly our attention is called to this fact by St. Luke in his narrative of Pentecost. The disciples were not scattered units, when God first cast His bright beams of light upon them ; "they were all with one accord in one place ;"⁴ the sound as of a rushing mighty wind, "filled all the house where they were sitting,"⁵ and made "men to be one mind in" that "house ;"⁶ in short, the

¹ 1 John i. 5.² 2 Cor. iv. 6.³ Gen. i. 3.⁴ Acts ii. 1.⁵ Acts ii. 2.⁶ Ps. lxxviii. 6, P.B.V.

Holy Ghost visited the disciples as a family. What an argument is this for common or united prayer—prayer made in the house of prayer, and where other members of the family are gathered together in the name of Jesus, and “agree” with us “as touching” the things “that” they “shall ask.”¹ The two or three are God’s household, and the consecrated building is their heavenly Father’s house, and consequently their home,—the modern representative and symbol of that upper room, where the disciples abode² after the Ascension, and where God first shined into the hearts of His people, and lifted up the light of His countenance upon them at Pentecost.

“That it.” It is not without interest to observe that the Church is always “it” in the Book of Common Prayer, not (as one might rather expect) “she.” “We pray for the good estate of the Catholick Church; that *it* may be so guided;” “cleanse and defend thy Church; and because *it* cannot continue in safety;”³ “that through thy protection *it* may be free from all adversities.”⁴ In the Latin Offices, as also in the Greek Testament, this, of course, could not be so, because both in Latin and Greek the word for Church is a feminine noun. But it is equally Scriptural, when speaking of the Church collectively, to use either the feminine or the neuter. For “the Church,” we are told in our Ordinal, “is the Spouse and Body of Christ.”⁵ Regarded as Christ’s bride, the Church would be, of course, “she;” regarded as His body, “it.”

“That it being enlightened by the doctrine of thy blessed Apostle and Evangelist St. John.” The Word of God is a light no less than His Spirit. “Thy word is a

¹ St. Matt. xviii. 19. ² See Acts i. 13. ³ 16th Sunday after Trinity.

⁴ 22d Sunday after Trinity. ⁵ Form and Manner of Ordering of Priests.

lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”¹ “The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding² unto the simple.” All pretence to divine illumination, independently of the written Word of God, is pure fanaticism. When Peter begins to preach after he had been divinely illuminated at Pentecost, half his sermon is made up of citations from the Old Testament. The Word bears to the light of grace, which is shed abroad in our hearts, the same relation which the sun, moon, and stars bear to natural light. Light was created before the heavenly bodies; but when, on the fourth day, the heavenly bodies were brought into existence, the light collected itself there, and has streamed forth thence ever since. Similarly, Divine illumination and inspiration were poured forth lavishly on all orders and degrees of disciples at Pentecost; but, since the Canon of the New Testament has been completed, the Divine light has collected itself in the volume of the Scriptures, thence to flow forth for the edification of the Church to the time of the end.

“By the doctrine of thy blessed Apostle and Evangelist St. John.” It was “*doctrines*” (or teachings) in the old Latin Collect. Cranmer changed it to the singular (*doctrine*), and wisely so, it seems to me; for the singular expresses better the unity of St. John’s teaching, the nucleus round which it all gathered. In the first Chapter of his Gospel he speaks of Jesus as “the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,”³ and in the first Chapter of his first Epistle (appointed at the Reformation to be read as the Epistle for St. John’s Day, in lieu of a passage from Ecclesiasticus, which appears in the mediæval Offices) he says, “This is the message which we have heard of him, and declare

¹ Ps. cxix. 105.² Ps. cxix. 130.³ St. John i. 9.

unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."¹ The keystone of St. John's theology may be said to be God as light, and Christ as light.

It was evidently the new Epistle for St. John's Day, which suggested to Bishop Cosin to give a practical turn to the end of this beautiful Collect. For the message which St. John was commissioned to declare—that "God is light"—he thus comments upon: "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."² What is it to "walk in the light," or, as the Collect has it, to "walk in the light of God's truth?" There are in light two classes of rays; bright rays—orange, red, yellow, green; and sombre rays, which chasten the bright ones, and prevent the light from becoming a glare,—indigo, blue, violet. There are in God two classes of perfections; bright perfections—such as mercy, long-suffering, graciousness, love; and stern perfections, equally with the bright ones essential to the perfection of the Divine Character—holiness, justice, truth. And there are in God's Word, which is the expression of His character, two classes of testimonies—one of overflowing mercy and grace to every sinner who drops his sin, and lays hold of Christ's atonement; the other a testimony of "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil."³ To walk in view of both these classes of perfections, and both these testimonies; to hold both before the eyes of our mind, and to conduct ourselves accordingly, is to walk in the light, as God is in the light, or to walk in the light of God's

¹ 1 John i. 5.² 1 John i. 6, 7.³ Rom. ii. 8, 9.

truth. And in the Acts of the Apostles such conduct is called walking "in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost."¹ "In the fear of the Lord,"—in a holy apprehension of that stern justice which could not be satisfied but by the sacrifice of Christ; and, at the same time, in the abundant comfort, peace, and joy which the sacrifice ministers when embraced with living faith.

"That it may at length attain to the light of everlasting life"—the light which we commonly call *glory*, as distinct from *grace*. What is meant by that ordinary religious phrase, the state of glory? Viewed in its essentials, the state of glory is the perfection of our nature,—that great end for which man was originally designed and constructed; but which, in the order of God's counsel and providence, he can only reach by degrees. The grub in the chrysalis state is so constructed as ultimately to become a butterfly; and man has powers and faculties in him, both physical and mental, which cannot possibly be developed fully under the conditions which the life that now is, animal and secular, lays upon him. The full developement of these powers at the Resurrection is what is properly meant by the state of glory. But when a glimpse into this state of glory is given us in the Holy Scripture, the invariable accompaniment of it is a brilliant light—light enwrapping, encompassing, streaming forth from the person. Thus the Transfiguration was a presentment of our Lord in His glorified state. And when He is seen in the glorified state by His beloved Apostle, the description is that of a figure interpenetrated by a brilliant light; "His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned

¹ Acts ix. 31.

in a furnace . . . and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.”¹

May God bring us all to that great city, the holy Jerusalem, which has the glory of God, and which hath “no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it: for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.”² And in order to this, may He dispose us to be faithful to the light of grace, faithful to the illumination of His Spirit, and to the direction of His Word; for so, and so only, can we “at length attain to the light of everlasting life.”

¹ Rev. i. 14, 15, 16.

² Rev. xxi. 23.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE INNOCENTS' DAY.

☩ Almighty God, who out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast ordained strength, and madest infants to glorify thee by their deaths; Mortify and kill all vices in us, and so strengthen us by thy grace, that by the innocency of our lives, and constancy of our faith even unto death, we may glorify thy holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Deus, cujus hodierna die præconium Innocentes martyres non loquendo sed moriendo confessi sunt; omnia in nobis vitiorum mala mortifica; ut fidem tuam quam lingua nostra loquitur, etiam moribus vita fateatur. Qui cum Deo Patre et Spiritu Sancto vivit et regnat per. (*Miss. Sar. Col. 67.*)

WE hardly know whether to say that this Collect was made new at the last Revision in 1662 or not. On the one hand, the petition of it, "Mortify and kill all vices in us," is found in the Prayer-Book of 1549, where there is a faithful translation of the old Latin Collect.¹ On the other hand, a text from the Psalms, which in the Missal of Sarum formed the "Officium"² (or, as we should say,

¹ Almighty God, whose praise this day the young innocents thy witnesses hath confessed, and shewed forth, not in speaking, but in dying: mortify and kill all vices in us, that in our conversation, our life may express thy faith, which with our tongues we do confess: through Jesus Christ our Lord.

² Ex ore infantium, Deus, et lactentium perfecisti laudem propter inimicos tuos. (*Miss. Sar. Col. 67.*)

Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings, O God, thou hast perfected praise because of thine enemies. Ps. viii. 2.

the Introit) for Innocents' Day, has been woven with great appropriateness into the invocation of the Collect, and the whole of the aspiration (or clause which succeeds the direct petition) is new. Nor is this a sufficient account of the alteration which the Latin Collect underwent; for in truth the point of the prayer was changed; and that being done, although some traces of the original remain in the phraseology of the present one, we may perhaps say that the old one was swept away and a new one substituted. The point of the original Collect was that, as the Innocents "confessed God, not by speaking, but by dying," so we, by the mortification of our vices, might confess Him, not only with our lips, but in our lives, (observe the antithesis, they by dying, we by living; and again, they, not with their tongues, for they could not speak articulately, we with our tongues indeed, but with our lives as well). The point of the present Collect is that, as the Innocents glorified God by death, so we may glorify Him by the innocency of our lives, to which is very properly added the constancy of our faith. Thus the antithesis is not obliterated, while greater fulness and body is certainly given to the prayer. Surely the alteration is in this instance a great improvement.

"O Almighty God, who out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast ordained strength." For this citation from the eighth Psalm we are indebted to the Revisers of 1662, who threw into the Collect, as I have said, a text which served as the Introit in the old Latin Offices. It is a singularly happy citation; but it may be doubted whether persons in general see how to apply it. Probably the prevailing impression is that, like the clause which immediately follows, it is meant to apply to the massacred babes of Bethlehem. It appears to me much easier

and better to understand it of the infant Saviour. Innocents' Day is in the octave of Christmas, the third day after the Feast of the Nativity; we have not yet lost sight of the holy Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in the manger of the caravanserai at Bethlehem. The subject of the eighth Psalm, read in the light thrown upon it by the New Testament, is the wondrous condescension of God in becoming man for our sakes, in stooping to be made a little lower than the angels. And as it is in infancy that we see man at his weakest, our Lord's condescension is especially glorified in His having become an infant, and having been exhibited as such to the Jews in the person of the Shepherds, to the Gentiles in the person of the Wise Men. The Psalm, in the first instance, leaps down with one bound from heaven to earth, as it were, in the train of the Incarnate Saviour; "O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained" (or founded) "strength." As one of our Christmas Anthems says, the words of which are taken from the Wisdom of Solomon; "While all things were in quiet silence, and that night was in the midst of her swift course, thine Almighty word leaped down from heaven out of thy royal throne;"¹ leaped down to become what? a man in the full maturity of his powers, wise, strong, active, independent? nay, but a babe and a suckling, stretching His arms towards His mother, wailing to her, comforted and lulled by her. This Incarnation of the Son of God was indeed an "ordaining of strength," or, as we have it more literally in the margin of our Bibles, a "founding of strength" on God's part. In the Incarna-

¹ Wisd. xviii. 14, 15.

tion and Nativity the first foundation was laid of an impregnable tower of spiritual strength. This Babe was indeed to suffer; to bleed, to agonize, to die; but through suffering, and blood, and agony, and death, He was to triumph; to be crowned with glory and honour; and to have all things put under Him,—the world under His Providence, the Church, not only under His Providence, but under His spiritual headship and influence also. But His passage to this glory must needs be through blood and suffering, to others as well as to Himself; others were to bleed for Him (mysterious dealing of Divine Providence) before He could bleed for others. That an augury of His propitiatory sacrifice might be given in His very earliest infancy, others died to save His earthly life, whose souls He afterwards died to save; and thus, in another and lower sense of the words, the Lord Jesus was saved by blood, as all His people are.

And with this deliverance of His the Collect deals in the next clause, “and madest infants to glorify thee by their deaths.” But how did these infants glorify God by their deaths? Let us not pass from this assertion until we understand it. They glorified God by their deaths, because their deaths contributed to work out His highest purpose. God’s highest purpose is the salvation of His fallen creature man. This salvation could not be but by a Saviour, who in His life was to fulfil the righteousness, and in His death to submit to the curse, of the law. All the hopes and prospects of our race, therefore, were suspended on the Saviour’s reaching manhood. Cut off in infancy, He could neither have obeyed the precept, nor submitted Himself to the curse. And, humanly speaking, He was on the very point of being cut off in infancy. If St. Joseph had not fled

by night,¹ next morning Herod's executioners would have been battering at his door, and demanding the Holy Child for slaughter. All the babes of Bethlehem, from two years old and under, were cruelly massacred, in the hope of involving the new-born King. But He, through the intimation made to Joseph by the angel, escaped in time, that He might have this early feature of resemblance to Moses, who also in his infancy narrowly, and by a marvellous stroke of Providence, escaped a king's wrath.² Is it asked why the life of the Holy Babe could not have been secured without any suffering to these poor Innocents and their mothers? Has not God all resources at His command? Could He not have struck Herod dead, or have made him relent of his cruel purpose at the last moment? Such is not God's way. He does not interfere with the freedom of the human will. He does not compel a man either to forbear from what is wrong, or to do what is right. The present system of things He allows to work itself out unto the end, and to develope freely all the vice and misery which the fall has brought into it. And though He has often worked by miracle (as, in the case before us, the angelic vision to Joseph was out of the common course of nature), He always, out of respect to His own laws, contents Himself with the least amount of miracle which will serve the purpose, and employs ordinary human agency, wherever it is open to Him to do so. And if these babes did suffer from the cruelty of a tyrant, it was suffering for Christ's sake, it was a foreshadowing of martyrdom, and indeed an enacting of it in one of its features. These little ones were taken to rest by Him, for whom they had laid down their lives. If in one point of view the massacre fulfilled those stern words

¹ See St. Matt. ii. 14.

² See Exod. ii. 3.

of His, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword;"¹ in another it fulfilled those gracious and consolatory words, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God."² It was a summons made by the Infant Saviour to infants, by one short sharp pang to pass into Paradise, and to behold for themselves, and not by their angels, the face of His Father which is in heaven.³

"Mortify and kill all vices in us." If a distinction is to be drawn between "mortify" and "kill" (two words which represent one in the petition of the original Collect), we must take "mortify" to represent the gradual process of exterminating the vices, and "kill" the ultimate result of the process, their death and final extinction. It is interesting to observe that God is here called upon to mortify the vices of our nature, whereas in the Scriptural passages bearing on the subject man is charged to do the work himself; "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry;"⁴ "I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul."⁵ The reconciliation is easy; God must work in chief, by granting us "the true circumcision of the Spirit;" but none the less must man's will work, with and under God, in the way of self-denial, self-discipline, and self-control. And it may be added that, when God sees His children slack in the work of self-discipline, He takes the scourge into His own hand and inflicts the necessary discipline Himself, chastening us for our profit, that we,

¹ St. Matt. x. 34.² St. Mark x. 14.³ See St. Matt. xviii. 10.⁴ Col. iii. 5.⁵ 1 Pet. ii. 11.

being weaned (as it were) from the vices of our nature, may be partakers of His holiness.¹ And it is an axiom of the spiritual life that the crosses, which our Heavenly Father chooses for us and lays upon us, are far better than those which we choose and lay upon ourselves. They have all His wisdom and love in them.

“That by the innocency of our lives.” The antitheses of the Latin Collect are not quite lost ; here is a fragment of them. The babes of Bethlehem glorified God by their *deaths*. We are to glorify Him by the innocency of our *lives*. Christ would have His disciples become as little children, and He calls them babes, and thanks the Father for having revealed to such babes, and not to the wise and prudent, the great things of His kingdom.² And St. Peter charges us, as new-born babes, to desire the sincere milk of the word, that we may grow thereby,³ and the Psalmist to “keep innocency, and take heed unto the thing that is right : for that shall bring a man peace at the last.”⁴ “Peace at the last.” Was this passage in the thoughts of Bishop Cosin when he added, with admirable adroitness, to the petition for innocency of life another for the constancy of our faith even unto death, thus reminding us at the same time of that lovely promise to the Church in Smyrna ; “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life”?⁵ Innocency of life, freedom from vice, good moral character, this is what many build their hopes upon, who would not lay claim to constancy of faith. Freedom from vice (even if we have come to it without a struggle, by sheer force of a phlegmatic natural temperament) is not a thing to be despised or cried down ; it gives a man certain great advantages ; but, in order to be-

¹ See Heb. xii. 10.

² See St. Matt. xi. 25.

³ See 1 Pet. ii. 2.

⁴ Ps. xxxvii. 38.

⁵ Rev. ii. 10.

come "the spot of" God's true "children,"¹—the innocence of the babes of His kingdom,—it must be vitalised by a constant faith. So vitalised, and enduring unto the end amid the assaults of temptation, it will enable us to shine like lights in the world, and to glorify God by our good works and holy example. And this glorification will culminate and rise to its highest point, if holy living be followed up by holy dying, if the witness borne to Christ in the life be sealed by manifest communion with Him, and by the commendation of the spirit into His hands in the hour of death, after the pattern of the first Christian martyr, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."²

¹ See Deut. xxxii. 5.

² Acts vii. 59.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CIRCUMCISION OF CHRIST.

Almighty God, who madest thy blessed Son to be circumcised, and obedient to the law for man; Grant us the true Circumcision of the Spirit; that, our hearts, and all our members, being mortified from all worldly and carnal lusts, we may in all things obey thy blessed will; through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Omnipotens Deus, cujus unigenitus hodierna die, ne legem solveret, quam adimplere venerat; corporalem suscepit circumcisionem; spirituali circumcissione mentes nostras ab omnibus vitiorum incentivis expurget; et suam in nos infundet benedictionem. Amen. [*Greg. Sac. Menard*, p. 13. Given by Palmer in his "*Origines Liturgicæ*."]]

WE can hardly call this Collect a translation. But the idea of it was probably borrowed from a benediction for the octave of Christmas Day, which is found in Gregory's Sacramentary, and which we have printed above in a parallel column. In dealing with this benediction, our Reformers (in 1549) inserted, as was their wont, several explicit references to passages of Holy Scripture, certainly making the prayer much richer and fuller of meaning than it was before.

Two points of interest offer themselves in this Collect, which are rarely met with in the rest of the Prayer Book. One is, that a certain interpretation is put upon one of the Scriptural passages referred to, by the connexion in which it is introduced, which, though edifying and useful, is probably not the true one. Another is, that

the king's printers have taken a liberty with the prayer, by inserting a pronoun into it, which pronoun, if it does not hurt the sense, certainly does not help it.

"Almighty God, who madest thy blessed Son to be circumcised, and obedient to the law." Circumcision was the entrance into the Covenant of the Law; and the person receiving it involved himself in every other legal obligation, according to that word of St. Paul's, "I testify . . . to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law."¹ Christ, therefore, who complied with all the Law's demands for us, must needs be circumcised. The Circumcision falls on the octave of Christmas (that is, on the eighth day after Christmas, counting Christmas Day as one), for two reasons. First, because our Lord was actually circumcised exactly one week after He was born. In the institution of Circumcision it was said to Abraham, "He that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you."² The Jews reckoned nothing perfect until seven days had passed over it from the day of its production, and the eighth had arrived; because the creation of the world with the ensuing rest occupied seven days. We find that the Law was punctually complied with in our Lord's case; "When eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS."³ But there is a deeper reason than this for the Feast of the Circumcision falling just one week after Christmas. The Nativity of Christ and His Circumcision are linked together by a text of Scripture, and also in the order of thought,—“God sent forth his Son,” we are told, “made of a woman;”—here is the Nativity of Christ; and then immediately the Apostle adds, “made under the law;”⁴ here is the Circumcision, the

¹ Gal. v. 3. ² Gen. xvii. 12. ³ St. Luke ii. 21. ⁴ Gal. iv. 4.

act by which He first became involved in legal obligations. "Who is this that is born into the world so mysteriously that none can declare His generation?" we might ask on Christmas Day. And the first answer came on the Feast of the Circumcision; the great Law-fulfiller; the only child of man who ever did fulfil God's law perfectly. And hence the Nativity and the Circumcision are coupled together in the pleadings of the Litany, as if they followed one another by a natural sequence; "By thy holy Nativity and Circumcision. . . . Good Lord, deliver us."

"Obedient to the law *for us*." Let us clearly understand that Christ received circumcision and fulfilled all other legal liabilities for us, as our Representative and Substitute; and therefore we in Him have met and fully discharged all such liabilities, whether moral or ceremonial.

"Grant us the true circumcision of the Spirit." Does the Spirit here mean the *Holy* Spirit? As the Collect stood in Edward's First Book, it certainly did; for there the words are, "Grant us the true circumcision of *thy* Spirit." In the Second Book, "*thy*" was altered to "*the*;" and so it has continued ever since. And, as our present Prayer Books are printed, the Holy Spirit is clearly meant, because the word "Spirit" is spelt with a capital S. But then the question arises whether there is any authority but that of the king's printers for spelling it with a capital. It is not so spelt in the Black Letter Prayer Book, which embodies the alterations made at the Savoy Conference, and of which the Sealed Books are copies. And in the old Latin benediction, which (as I have said) forms the basis of this Collect, the word is expressed by the adjective "spiritual;" "Almighty

God, whose only-begotten Son on this day received *bodily* circumcision, purify your minds by the *spiritual* circumcision from every allurements to vice." But let us go at once to the text on which this part of the prayer is founded, and ascertain the meaning of the word "spirit" there. "He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, *in the spirit*, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."¹ Does "the spirit" *here* mean the Holy Spirit? Not exactly, I think. Rather it seems to mean the human spirit, as moved and quickened by the Holy Spirit. "The letter" is the written enactment of the Law, prescribing bodily circumcision on the eighth day. And "the flesh" must be the outward part of our nature,—in fact, the body. "The spirit," therefore, would seem to be the spiritual part of our nature, which is operated upon internally by the Holy Spirit of God. "Grant us that true (or anti-typical) circumcision, the sphere of which is the spiritual part of our nature, and which is wrought by the agency of the Holy Spirit within rather than ordained by a written precept."

Now what will be the effect of the true spiritual circumcision, if we undergo it? how will it manifest itself? "That our hearts, and all our members, being mortified from all worldly and carnal lusts." "Hearts" probably is intended to go with "worldly," and "members" with "carnal." The heart is to be mortified from all "worldly," as well as the body from all "carnal lusts." A needful exhortation, surely! For worldliness, if freely indulged, will ruin the soul as utterly as immorality; and indeed it is a more subtle snare, since it does not alarm the conscience so much as sensual vices.

¹ Rom. ii. 28, 29.

“All our members, being mortified.” The phraseology is evidently drawn from Col. iii. 5, “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth.” The “members” mentioned in the Collect are without doubt, I think, the members of the body. But it is very doubtful whether the Apostle means exactly this by “members which are upon the earth.” For he goes on to specify, not members of the body, but certain lusts and desires, one at least of which has no connexion with the body whatever. “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and *covetousness, which is idolatry.*” There is little doubt that St. Paul is speaking figuratively, when he bids us “mortify our members which are upon the earth.” He means our flesh or corrupt nature, which he sometimes compares to a body that has several members, and in each member a feeling and sensibility. At one time this corrupt nature instigates to sensuality (this is the action of one of the members); at another to pride and ambition; at another to covetousness; and again to selfishness, and so forth. This flesh, or “mind of the flesh,” which we are bidden here to mortify, is not, St. Paul tells us, “subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.”¹ And this is what makes me think that the “members” spoken of in the Collect are something different from the “members” alluded to by St. Paul; for the former are expressly said to be capable of obedience to the law of God, at least according to the original draught of the Collect.

In the Black Letter Prayer Book of 1636, in which the Revisers appointed at the Savoy Conference made their MS. corrections and alterations, and of which book

¹ Rom. viii. 7.

the Sealed Prayer Books,¹ ordered to be procured by every Cathedral Body, ought to be and profess to be copies, the "we" in the latter clause of the Collect is omitted, and "our hearts and all our members" stands as the nominative case of the verb "obey;" "that our hearts and all our members, being mortified from all worldly and carnal lusts, may in all things obey thy blessed will." In mak-

¹ The Sealed Books are the printed (black letter) copies of the Book of Common Prayer, which, having been examined and carefully corrected by Commissioners appointed for the purpose, were certified by them, and exemplified under the Great Seal in 1662. One of these Sealed Books, annexed to a printed copy of the Act of Uniformity (which became law on the 19th of May 1662), was ordered to be obtained by the respective deans and chapters of every cathedral or collegiate church before the 25th of December in that year; and a similar copy was to be delivered into the respective Courts at Westminster, and into the Tower of London, to be preserved for ever among the records. Only ten Sealed Books are known to exist at present,—viz., those belonging to the Tower, the four Courts of Law, and the Cathedrals of St. Paul's, Christ Church, Ely, Chichester, and Norwich. [See Procter's "*History of the Book of Common Prayer*," pp. 133, 134. Cambridge, 1855.] Mr. Archibald John Stephens has published, for the Ecclesiastical History Society [London, 1849], an annotated edition of the Book of Common Prayer, the text of which is taken from the Sealed Book for the Chancery, collated with all the other Sealed Books known to exist, with the exception of those in Chichester and Norwich Cathedrals.

The Manuscript Prayer Book attached to the Act of Uniformity, which is the fountain of all the Sealed Books, and which, strangely enough, had been dissevered from the Act and lost for many years, was discovered in 1867 in a closet in the Library of the House of Lords. With it was discovered a still more interesting document, the printed Black Letter Prayer Book of 1636, in which the corrections were made by Bishop Cosin and his committee in the revision of 1661. It was from this printed Prayer Book of 1636, corrected in manuscript, that the MS. copy of the Prayer Book, which is the fountain of the Sealed Books, was written out fair. A photozincograph facsimile of this Black Letter Prayer Book, with the manuscript alterations and additions made in 1661, was published in 1871, under the authority of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, by Longman and Pickering of London, Parker of Oxford, and Macmillan of Cambridge.

ing the copies called the Sealed Books, one of which still exists in the Treasury of Norwich Cathedral, and is indeed a great and somewhat rare treasure (for only five of the Cathedrals have retained their Sealed Books), the king's printers seem to have inserted the "we," perhaps only because they thought that the clause sounded better to the ear with than without the "we." The alteration, however, may seem to derive some sanction from the fact that in Queen Elizabeth's Latin Prayer Book, a very loose translation of the Book of Common Prayer, which she ordered to be made for the use of the Universities and Public Schools, the same liberty is taken with the original; "we" are said to "obey" God's "will," and "our hearts and all our members being mortified from all worldly and carnal lusts," is a pendent participial clause, thrown into the case, which is known in Latin as the ablative absolute.

I must think that the alteration made by the king's printers, and stereotyped in our present Prayer Book, is, like many other alterations, no improvement. "That our hearts and all our members may obey;" so it ran once, and there was an edifying meaning in it. As "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness,"¹ so with the heart also he obeyeth unto sanctification. No obedience avails aught which springs not from the heart. "My son, give me thine heart;"² "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, this is the first and great commandment."³ "If a man would give all the substance of his house for" (*i.e.* instead of, as a substitute for) "love, it would utterly be contemned."⁴ But then, remember that a really mortified heart will draw after it in the

¹ Rom. x. 10.

² Prov. xxiii. 26.

³ St. Matt. xxii. 37, 38.

⁴ Cant. viii. 7.

pathway of obedience really mortified "members." Mortified members are members slain, or put to death; but slain as victims, to be presented on God's altar. "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."¹ The hands, mortified from all dishonest uses, are to obey God's will by honest labour, and by giving to him that needeth. The feet are to obey God's will by walking on His errands of love and mercy. The eyes, mortified from that love of external splendour which is called "the lust of the eyes,"² are to obey God's will by contemplating His works or reading His written Word. The ears, stopped against flattery and sinful enticement, are to obey by listening to all wise and godly instructions. The tongue, lastly, mortified from all corrupt communication and idle words, is to obey God's will by speaking and singing His praise. And these various "members" are all prompted and guided, in their obedience to God's will, by the heart. This is the living sacrifice to which the renewed mind is exhorted, and the making of which is the evidence that we have received the "circumcision of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."³

¹ Rom. xii. 1.² 1 John ii. 16.³ Rom. ii. 29.

CHAPTER X.

COLLECT FOR THE EPIPHANY.

© God, who by the leading of a star didst manifest thy only-begotten Son to the Gentiles; Mercifully grant, that we, which know thee now by faith, may after this life have the fruition of thy glorious Godhead; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Deus, qui hodierna die Unigenitum tuum gentibus stella duce revelasti: concede propitius, ut qui jam te ex fide cognovimus, usque ad contemplandam speciem tuæ celsitudinis perducamur. Per eundem.—*Greg. Sac.—Miss. Sar.*

WE have seen that in the Revision of 1662 the Collect for St. John the Evangelist's Day gained very much in point. And one great feature of the Collects is their point, the unity of thought which runs through these little prayers, and strings together the various clauses of them like beads upon one thread. The Collect before us, though in its present form a very noble prayer, has certainly lost point in the translation. For thus runs its petition in the Missal of Sarum, "Mercifully grant that we, which know thee now *by faith*, may be led onwards until we come to gaze upon thy Majesty *by sight*." It may be said that the having "the fruition of the glorious Godhead after this life" is one and the same thing with gazing upon His Majesty by sight. And so it is. But the clause in the original has several advantages over the translation. First, the mention of sight as well as faith recalls to the mind immediately the text upon which the

entire prayer is built—"We walk by faith, not by sight."¹ Then the "we may be led onwards until" is an intended application, which no one can miss, of the story of the wise men to ourselves. When they were in doubt as to their next step, "the star, which they saw in the East, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was."² So we pray that we may be led onward, by the starlight guidance of faith, until in a better and brighter life we come to gaze upon the Saviour face to face, to "see him as he is."³ And the Latin scholar will not omit to notice that the word which I have rendered "gaze upon" is the very word appropriated to the study of the heavens. It is our word to *contemplate*; and to contemplate was in its origin an augur's word: it signified the preliminary action of the augur, when taking the omens, which was to mark out with his wand a particular portion of the sky, in which the omens were to be expected. Hence the original meaning of the word *contemplate* is to study the firmament, as astrologers or astronomers do; and in the forty-seventh chapter of Isaiah, where the stargazers and astrologers of Babylon are spoken of as of no avail in the day of her visitation, this very word ("qui contemplabantur sidera," "who contemplated the stars") is used in the Vulgate or Latin version of the Scriptures.⁴ So that the thought of the wise men, their occupation, their pilgrimage, and the blessed end of their

¹ 2 Cor. v. 7.² St. Matt. ii. 9.³ 1 John iii. 2.⁴ Esai. xlvii. 13.

Isaiah xlvii. 13.

Defecisti in multitudine consiliorum tuorum; stent, et salvent te augures cœli, qui contemplabantur sidera, et supputabant menses, ut ex eis annuntiarent ventura tibi.

Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee.

pilgrimage, is carried right through the original Collect, whereas from the final clause of our translation, "may after this life have the fruition of thy glorious Godhead," the thought is altogether expunged.

"O God, who by the leading of a star didst manifest thy only-begotten Son to the Gentiles." The actual leading of the star, as distinct from the indication which its first appearance had given them of the birth of the King of the Jews, seems to have been limited to the pilgrimage from Jerusalem to Bethlehem. They had been made aware probably by a special Divine intimation, combined with the prophecy of Balaam about "the Star" which should "come out of Jacob, and the Sceptre which should rise out of Israel,"¹ that the new meteor denoted the birth of the King of the Jews. To find a king, they must needs go to His capital; and the road to Jerusalem was perfectly well known to them; so that, while pursuing it, they needed no guidance. When they arrived, and in answer to their inquiries were informed that the Child would be found at Bethlehem, as they probably did not know the way to that town, still less the way to Joseph's house, "the star went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was." Their walking in pursuance of the star's indication in the first place, and afterwards their actually following the star, is a beautiful emblem—such is the teaching of this Collect—of our walking after Christ by faith. If we study the Christian evidences with a docile and devout mind—specially the evidence of prophecy—"the day" will "dawn" within us, "and the day-star arise in" our "hearts."² But as soon as the day-star has arisen, we must bestir ourselves as the wise men did, and begin to walk in the direction

¹ See Numb. xxiv. 17.

² See 2 Pet. i. 19.

which it indicates : we shall never see Christ face to face as He is, unless we follow up the rudimentary knowledge of Him which is given us by faith ; as it is said, "Then we shall know, *if we follow on* to know the Lord."¹ Guidance sufficient for our needs will at all times be given us ; but it is well to remember that it is not a guidance which will clear up all difficulties, or resolve all mysteries. If it were, it would no more be guidance by faith, but guidance by sight. Guidance by faith is guidance by starlight ; and the stars, however bright they are, while they may show pitfalls and precipices, yet never reveal the extent, much less the colours, of a landscape. Moreover, starlight is a bleak and ungenial guidance ; while the stars shed light, they shed no warmth. And those who walk by faith, and whose faith is genuine, are yet not without their discomforts, their doubts, their periods when feeling is at its lowest ebb. If the glow of assurance is sometimes vouchsafed, it is soon withdrawn again ; and from the ecstasy of the Mount of Transfiguration we descend into the questionings and disputations of the valley.

"Mercifully grant that we, which know thee now *by faith*." Not by instruction, not by education, not by reading and study, but by faith. Education, instruction, study, reading, may enable us to know *about* God ; but knowing about Him and knowing Him, the being thoroughly well informed as to His titles, will, precepts, ordinances, works of nature and grace, and the being practically and experimentally acquainted with Him, oh ! what different things they are ! God cannot possibly be known, except by the spiritual faculty, which is the faculty in our nature for knowing Him. Could a man be rightly

¹ Hos. vi. 3.

said to have any real knowledge of poetry, who, being entirely destitute of fancy and imagination, yet could recite a great many poems by heart, and knew the histories of all the more distinguished poets? Surely not. If he have not the poetic faculty, he cannot really comprehend or enter into one of those compositions, which he rolls so glibly off his tongue. The conscience, or moral sense, is the faculty by which alone we take cognisance of God; and if this faculty be not reached and touched by the revelations of the Gospel, if those revelations do not disclose to us the Father after whom we yearn, the Saviour whom we need to reconcile the Father to us, and the Spirit whom we need to reconcile us to the Father, there can be no real knowledge of God whatever, though our head be full of Catechisms and Creeds. And seeing that these revelations are of things unseen, of things which the human conscience indeed re-echoes, but to which our experience and senses bear no witness, they are revelations made to and grasped "by faith."

"May be led onwards, until we come to gaze upon thy Majesty by *sight*." The loss of this "led onwards" in our translation is a great one. If we are hereafter to see Christ as He is, and to "have the fruition" in Him "of" the "glorious Godhead," this blessed end will not be detached from, but stand in distinct and living relation to, our present course; there must be a gradual "leading onwards" through darkness, difficulties, and trials, until we reach it. Happy are we, if towards the end of our course the star again presents itself and moves on in front, and we feel more assured than ever that we have not trusted to cunningly-devised fables, or delusions of the mind, when first, at the indications which it gave, we set forth on our Christian pilgrimage. And

what will be the end of the course? "We shall see him as he is."¹ The wise men cannot be said to have gazed on *His Majesty* by sight; they rather gazed on His lowliness than His loftiness; they saw the young Child in a poor cottage, "all meanly wrapt in swaddling-bands," and surrounded by all the appurtenances of poverty. We, on the other hand, *shall* "gaze upon His Majesty by sight," shall look face to face upon that glorified form, which the beloved disciple saw when he was in the Spirit on the Lord's day;² and, by seeing Him as He is, shall be "changed into the same image,"³ so that there will be nothing to keep us back from Him (sin having been eradicated from our nature), but only a powerful attraction towards Him as the true rest-giving centre of our hearts, the true soul-satisfying object of worship. Nor will it be merely an outward homage which we shall then pay to God in Christ. We must not think of it simply as the kneeling of the Magians, and the presentation of their gifts. There will be a manifestation of God to the mind, heart, conscience, in all the beauty and blessedness of His character, a manifestation of which already many casual glimpses have been granted to us, but which has never shone upon us till now in cloudless meridian splendour. And this manifestation will fill the soul with joy; it will be the elevating, cheering, gladdening wine, which He will drink new with us in His Father's kingdom.⁴ It will not be a vision only, but a vision which fills the heart with rapture, and leads us to say with St. Peter, "Lord, it is good for us to be here."⁵ In short, it will be "the fruition of the glorious Godhead."

¹ 1 John iii. 2. ² See Rev. i. 10, 13, 14, 15, 16. ³ See 2 Cor. iii. 18.

⁴ See St. Matt. xxvi. 29.

⁵ St. Matt. xvii. 4.

CHAPTER XI.

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

O Lord, we beseech thee mercifully to receive the prayers of thy people which call upon thee; and grant that they may both perceive and know what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Vota quæsumus, Domine, supplicantis populi coelesti pietate proseguere: ut et quæ agenda sunt videant, et ad implenda quæ viderunt conualescant. Per Dominum.—Greg. Sac.—Miss. Sar.

ACCORDING to the plan hitherto adopted with the translated Collects, of exhibiting the discrepancies between the original and the translation, I give the literal rendering of the Collect before us, as it stands in the Sacramentary of Gregory:—"O Lord, we beseech thee, regard with the compassion of a heavenly Father the fervent desires of thy people, who make their supplications unto thee, that they may both see what things ought to be done, and may have strength to fulfil what they see. Through the Lord."

1. The Latin has the word "*vota*" ("vows" or "desires,") where our translation, somewhat more tamely, has "*prayers*." "*Vows*" or "*desires*" are words expressive of more fervour and spirituality than the word "*prayers*." Prayers may be only the utterance of the lips; we may say them without feeling them; but a vow is, in the strict and original meaning of the word, a prayer emphasised by some promise, which is to be fulfilled con-

ditionally on an answer being given to the prayer. Hence a vow means a prayer in its intensified form—a prayer which is the expression of some wish on which our whole heart and soul is bent. “Fervent desire” is perhaps the nearest approach we can make to the meaning in English. Are the prayers we offer in Church and elsewhere the expression of fervent desires? Our own hearts best know.

2. Observe what God (both in the original and in the translation) is implored to do with these prayers, the utterances of fervent desire. Not absolutely to grant them. God “gave” the Israelites “their desire,” when he showered the quails two cubits deep about their camp; but he “sent leanness withal into their souls.”¹ Some things which we wish for (more especially in youth) with passionate intensity, might prove not bread, but either stones or serpents, impediments in the heavenly race, or even venomous to the higher life of our spirits. Therefore, however fervent may be our desires, and however full and free our liberty of making them known at God’s throne of grace, we may not ask without reserve for the fulfilment of them. But does it follow that, because God does not grant a request, and could not do so consistently with the petitioner’s welfare, He therefore objects to its being laid before Him? On the contrary, the precept is; “Ye people, pour out your heart before him;”² “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.”³ God looks with favour and clemency on thousands of petitions which He cannot grant. He “mercifully receives” a prayer, even when He does not assent to it.

¹ Ps. cvi. 15, P.B.V., and Num. xi. 4, 31, 32, 33.

² Ps. lxii. 8.

³ Phil. iv. 6.

3. But the word "*Mercifully*" is also, I think, a little tame in comparison with the original. The original has here a word of frequent use in the old Latin Offices, and which it is impossible to express fully by any one word in English. In a connexion like this, it expresses not mere compassion, but the compassion which flows from God's fatherly relation to His baptized and believing children. It is the compassion of the prodigal's father, when he sees him returning, a compassion which finds its expression in the warmest of welcomes. The exact rendering is, "Follow up with divine fatherly compassion," or, as I have ventured to express it, "with the compassion of a heavenly Father." There is something inexpressibly soothing (is there not?) in the thought that God yearns over us with fatherly compassion, whenever, prostrate at the throne of grace, we lay bare before Him the desires of our hearts. The vows shall be most graciously received, even where they cannot be granted. And, in His own good time and way, the heavenly Father will give us something better. When the heart is assured of this, "the peace which passeth all understanding"¹ flows into it.

4. The more literal rendering of the words "who call upon thee" is "who supplicate thee." Whether, according to its derivation, the word "supplicate" indicates that the knees of the petitioner are bent under him, or, as seems more probable, that the open palms of the hands are extended towards the person from whom relief is sought, the idea conveyed by the word is the same—not prayer only, but prayer offered with an imploring earnestness. The Litany of the Church of England, the accents of which surely indicate special fervour, is called in its title "the Litany, or General Supplication." And the

¹ See Phil. iv. 7.

most intense prayer which man ever offered, prayer which was such an earnest wrestling with God as had never yet gone up from beneath the moon, our blessed Lord's prayer in the garden, has the name of "supplication" given to it in our authorised translation of the Epistle to the Hebrews, as also in the Latin Vulgate, "When he had offered up prayers and *supplications*, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death."¹ If the prayers of the sinless One were so intensely earnest, what have ours, think you, need to be?

5. "And grant." These words are an insertion of the translators, and probably a necessary one. In translating very terse Latin into English, some amount of enlargement and expansion is necessary to make it generally understood. But here the effect of the insertion is to unhook the latter part of the prayer from the foregoing, and to break up into two separate petitions what before was only one. But when there was only one petition, how did the parts of it hang together? I suppose in this way. Where God does not see fit to fulfil the prayers of His people, His favourable reception of them will show itself in enlightening them as to their duty and strengthening them to perform it. Where He cannot give the thing asked for, He will answer by light and strength. When we made known our requests to Him by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, we wanted *our* will done. His answer in effect is, "Nay, my child, not thy will, but *mine*, is thy highest good; and here is light to see my will, and strength to do it."

6. "May both perceive and know." The words "and know" are added by the translators. The Latin has only "may see." The addition of the verb

¹ Heb. v. 7.

to know is not superfluous. It conveys a slightly different notion from “perceive.” Every one who perceives knows; but the converse will not hold; every one who knows does not perceive. To perceive is to know by instinct; to know intuitively; to know might imply a long course of study, or train of reasoning, resulting in knowledge. We *perceive* how we ought to act by the whispers of God’s Spirit in the conscience; we arrive at *the knowledge* of how we ought to act by the study of God’s Word. The Word of God, of course, as well as the Spirit of God, plays a most important part in our moral guidance; but I apprehend that in the prayer before us spiritual intuition is the thing principally meant; that intuition for which the Apostle prays on behalf of his Colossian converts; “that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing;”¹ that intuition, which the heavenly Father pledges Himself to give, when He says to the penitent sinner, “I will guide thee *with mine eye*. Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding; whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle.”² As much as to say, “Do not make harsh modes of dealing and galling restraints necessary; do not enforce me to use violence in governing you. As a mother guides her children with her eye upon them, needing not always to speak, much less to chide, her eye betokening alarm when they are in danger, displeasure when they have begun to do wrong, approbation when they are striving to please her; so will I, your heavenly Father, indicate to you the course which I wish you to pursue by the secret instigations of my Spirit, if you will constantly keep yourselves in my

¹ Col. i. 9, 10.² Ps. xxxii. 8, 9.

presence, and listen with docility for my whispers." Let us then, in every perplexity about God's will, pray with Job, "That which I see not teach thou me."¹

7. "And also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same." The "grace" and the "faithfully" are expansions made by the translator, thought necessary perhaps in order to lead the mind to pause a little on the idea, but adding very little to the sense. "May have strength" (or become strong) "to fulfil what they see." This is the exact force of the original. Strength (that is, moral strength) can only be by grace. And the idea of "faithfully" is more or less implied in the verb "fulfil." To fulfil God's will is to execute it faithfully. How essential this clause is to the completeness of the prayer, we can understand only by considering the positively baneful effects of knowledge without practice. "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."² "And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes."³ "He that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great."⁴ "If ye know these things, happy are ye if" (and only if) "ye do them."⁵

¹ Job xxxiv. 32.² St. James iv. 17.³ St. Luke xii. 47.⁴ St. Luke vi. 49.⁵ St. John xiii. 17.

CHAPTER XII.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

Almighty and everlasting God,
who dost govern all things in
heaven and earth; Mercifully hear
the supplications of thy people,
and grant us thy peace all the
days of our life; through Jesus
Christ our Lord. Amen.

Omnipotens sempiterne Deus,
qui coelestia simul et terrena mo-
deraris; supplicationes populi tui
clementer exaudi, et pacem tuam
nostris concede temporibus. Per
Dominum.—*Greg. Sac.—Miss. Sar.*

IN translating this Collect, our Reformers have given a turn to the close of it, which must be admitted, I think, to be an improvement. The literal translation of the original, which is found in Gregory's Sacramentary, is as follows:—"Almighty and everlasting God, who dost control at once heavenly and earthly things, graciously regard the supplications of thy people, and grant thy peace to our times."

"Almighty and everlasting God." "Almighty;" here is God's power; "everlasting;" here is His perpetual existence in the future, long after our own generation has been swept away from the face of the earth, and when the affairs of men have taken a different turn, and the interests of men flow in a new channel. Nothing could be more exact as a translation than the word "everlasting." The original is an adjective derived from the adverb "always;" "always existing," in contrast with the transient and changeful existence of the

creatures. And there is something in the close of the prayer as it stands in the original, which carries us back to this opening of it. God endures through all times through all vicissitudes of human affairs. And in virtue of His Almightyness He controls those vicissitudes. We implore him, then, to "grant peace to our times"—those in which we ourselves have to play our part.

"Who dost govern all things." The Latin word is not that, which we have before met with in the Collects, and which, in its original acceptation, signifies the prudent guidance of a helmsman. The original meaning of *this* word is to set bounds to, and hence to restrain. Thus it is used of the government of the tongue, which, of course, consists in restraining it from idle words, and of the government of horses, which implies the holding them in with the bridle and turning them.¹ The word afterwards comes to have the more general meaning of administration and sway; but never altogether drops, I think, the notion of something which offers resistance to the administration, and rebels against the sway. Now, it is perfectly easy to see how, in the management of "earthly things," God finds such resistance to His sway. He has gifted man with freewill; and in the exercise of this freewill man has rebelled against Him, and has thereby introduced into human life and human affairs an element of disturbance, which complicates God's administration, and, to speak after the manner of men, makes it more difficult. Accordingly, as the Epistle to the Hebrews says, "we see not yet all things put under him,"² that is, under Jesus, who, we may usefully remind ourselves, is now governing the universe, in His mediatorial

¹ The phrase *moderari linguæ* is found in Plautus (*Curc.* 4, 1, 25); and *equos moderari ac flectere* in Cæsar (*Bell. Gall.* 4, 33). ² Heb. ii. 8.

character, as God's Viceroy, just as Joseph administered the kingdom of Egypt in Pharaoh's place.¹ That all things here below are not at present brought under the mediatorial sway of Jesus; that there is still something which resists His sway (and will resist it, until death, the last enemy, is put under His feet);² this is matter of sad experience; we have only to open our eyes in order to see it.—But "things in heaven," too, are said to be equally and at the same time restrained and controlled by God. How can this be? What resistance can be offered to God's sway in heaven? What unruly will can rise up against Him there? What untoward events can there demand the exercise of His overruling providence? (And yet the Collect for the Eighth Sunday after Trinity says that His "never-failing Providence ordereth all things both *in heaven* and earth.") The answer must be sought in such passages as, "There was war *in heaven*: "Michael and his angels fought against the dragon;"³ "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things in heaven*, and things in earth, and things under the earth;"⁴ "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (margin, "against wicked spirits in *heavenly* places.")⁵ All it is given us to know is, that in some lofty region, far beyond the reach of our senses (though not, of course, in that immediate Presence-Chamber of God, which is usually understood by the word "heaven"), a struggle for mastery between the powers of good and of evil is still going on, in which we men—immortal spirits, but dwelling in tabernacles of flesh and blood—are deeply

¹ See Gen. xli. 40-44.² See 1 Cor. xv. 25, 26.³ Rev. xii. 7.⁴ Philip. ii. 10.⁵ Eph. vi. 12.

interested; that God is controlling the fluctuating issues of this struggle for His own glory and in the interests of His elect people; that He restrains the spirits arrayed against us, and never suffers us to be tempted above that we are able;¹ and that, besides fortifying us for this warfare by His Holy Spirit, He employs the holy angels for our succour and defence. It is to their bright squadrons that Nebuchadnezzar refers, when he ascribes glory to God in this magnificent strain—"And he doeth according to his will *in the army of heaven*, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"²

I must not pass over without notice the word "at once," or "at the same time," which appears in the Latin Collect, though the translators have ignored it. "Who dost control at once" (or "at one and the same time") "things heavenly and earthly." It enlarges our notions of God's almighty power to conceive of Him as at one and the same time administering and controlling two such vast and distinct departments, as things in heaven and things on earth. And all successful prayer demands as one of its conditions that we shall go to God with large notions of His power.

"Mercifully hear the supplications of thy people." "Mercifully." The word is "Clementer;" "of thy clemency" (as Tertullus says to Felix), "I pray thee that thou wouldest hear us a few words"³—with gentleness, favour, and acceptance, as Ahasuerus accepted Esther, when he held out to her the golden sceptre.⁴ We shall all be graciously and favourably accepted, like Esther, if we approach God as she approached Ahasuerus, in royal

¹ See 1 Cor. x. 13.

² Dan. iv. 35.

³ Acts xxiv. 4.

⁴ See Esther v. 2.

apparel—the royal apparel, I mean, of the righteousness of Christ.¹

The word rendered “hear” means something more than mere hearing. It rather denotes listening, giving heed, paying attention to what is heard. I transplant a word from the prayer for the sanctification of the water in the Baptismal Office, and render, “*Regard* the supplications of thy people.”

“And grant us thy peace all the days of our life.” Now comes the different turn which our Reformers have given to the last clause of the prayer. In the original it stands thus; “Grant thy peace to our times,” not without one of those touches of antithesis, which are so observable in all the Latin Collects, and for which the terseness of the language gives so many occasions: “*thy* peace;” “*our* times;” as much as to say, “our times are very much disturbed; troublesome are the waves of this world; sundry and manifold are its changes; but Thou, O God, in Thine own unchanging nature, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever, enjoyest, amid all the vast labours of Thine administration, a perpetual calm, of which we pray Thee to distil one drop on these unquiet times.” The petition, as it stood originally, was precisely the same as that which we use in our daily Service, and which is designed as a brief summary of the second Collects for Morning and Evening Prayer, both of which sue for *peace*. “*Priest*. Give peace in our time, O Lord. *Answer*. Because there is none other that fighteth for us, but only thou, O God.” This petition is founded on a promise made to one King of Judah, and framed upon a sentiment expressed by another. It was promised by the word of

¹ The righteousness of Christ is the “raiment of needlework,” in which the heavenly bride shall be brought unto the king. (See Psalm xlv. 14.)

the Lord to David respecting Solomon; "I will give peace and quietness unto Israel *in his days*."¹ And when Hezekiah was threatened by Isaiah with the spoiling of his treasures, and the captivity and degradation of his sons, he expressed himself thus; "Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken. And he said, Is it not good, if peace and truth be *in my days*?"²

This sentiment at first jars upon our ears, as if it were selfish,—as if Hezekiah had meant, "So long as all is well in my own time, I care not what comes after me." We all know the story of the French king, who, in view of the financial embarrassments which his extravagance had caused, and of the seeds of anarchy and convulsion which were sown broadcast over France in his days, hugged himself in the thought that things would last his time at all events, and exclaimed, "After me the deluge!" A sentiment "of the earth, earthy," and well adapted to a worldly-minded politician. But, when another explanation is open to us, we will not believe this to have been good Hezekiah's meaning. His are not the accents of selfish congratulation on his personal exemption from calamities which must overtake others; but of humble thankfulness for what the Heavenly Father leaves him, even when He sees fit to chastise him. So pious and gentle a monarch cannot but have felt keenly the predicted captivity and degradation of his sons. But, bitter as the sentence was, there was one little drop of God's love instilled into the cup. Hezekiah should not himself see the calamity; he should be taken away from the evil to come.³ He is perfectly resigned to the word of the Lord, and gives this proof of being so, that he does not despise the little crumb of comfort dropped for him,

¹ 1 Chron. xxii. 9.

² 2 Kings xx. 19.

³ See Isaiah lvii. 1.

but takes it up, and makes the most of it. In his spirit we may most legitimately pray (as we do elsewhere) that God would grant peace to our times, so that His "Church may joyfully serve" Him "in all godly quietness."¹ But our wise Reformers have certainly pitched this clause in a higher key of spirituality, by so altering it as to make it a request for peace to ourselves rather than to our times—a prayer that God would *instil* peace *into* our hearts, rather than *distil* it *upon* our circumstances and surroundings. Peace in the heart through the blood of the cross, and the overshadowing of the wings of the Spirit; peace, through the consciousness that we are indeed taking Christ's yoke upon us and learning of Him,² and that God hears, and in His own good time and manner will answer, all our prayers for His sake, this peace may subsist and be enjoyed amid the most troublous and unquiet outward circumstances, just as a few feet beneath its agitated surface the sea is as calm and profoundly silent as the slumber of an infant.

¹ Collect for Fifth Sunday after Trinity.

² See St. Matt. xi. 29.

CHAPTER XIII.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

Almighty and everlasting God,
mercifully look upon our infirmities,
and in all our dangers and necessi-
ties stretch forth thy right hand
to help and defend us; through
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Omnipotens sempiterne Deus,
infirmittatem nostram propiti-
us respice; atque ad protegendum
nos dexteram tuæ majestatis ex-
tende. Per Dominum.—*Greg. Sac.*
—*Miss. Sar.*

THE Collects in the old Latin Office Books were sometimes too brief for the people to join in intelligently. While each of them was a gem of devotion for the student, and for those who had leisure to weigh their every word, they required just a touch of expansion before the meaning of them could be made to lay hold of the mind of an English congregation. Such touches of expansion our Reformers have usually given them with great judgment. We have an instance in the present Collect. The clause "in all our dangers and necessities" was added by the translators; and, in order to make what follows correspond more closely with the twofold expression "dangers and necessities," they have inserted the verb "help," where the original had nothing but "protect." And, probably for no other reason than that the rhythm of the clause is thereby improved to the ear, "the right hand of thy Majesty," a phrase which they have retained in another Collect,¹ is exchanged for "thy right hand."—Thus ran

¹ Collect for Third Sunday in Lent.

the Prayer, before these alterations in it were made; "Almighty and everlasting God, mercifully look upon our weakness, and stretch forth the right hand of thy Majesty to protect us. Through the Lord."

"Almighty and everlasting God," the strong and changeless One with whom we have to do, "mercifully look upon our weakness;" for so it is in the original, the word "infirmity" having been changed into the plural by the translators. Possibly, in making this seemingly slight alteration, they may have sought to establish a rather closer link of connexion between the Collect and the Gospel of the day. We are now in the Epiphany season, when we commemorate the various manifestations of Christ. The Gospel of the Third Sunday records the manifestation of Him by miraculous power over disease, how, by a touch in the case of leprosy,¹ and a word in the case of palsy,² He recovered patients from those maladies. Now, in the very chapter from which the Gospel is taken (St. Matt. viii.), these and similar maladies are expressly called "infirmities" in a passage which is cited by the Evangelist from the prophet Isaiah; "He cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, *Himself took our infirmities*, and bare our sicknesses."³ A significant passage truly, because it so clearly and emphatically brings before us the truth that our infirmities and sicknesses could not have been removed without being taken and borne; that there could have been no healing for man, had not Christ *taken* our flesh, which is weak, and been "crucified through weakness,"⁴ and thus *borne* "our sins in His own body on the tree."⁵

¹ St. Matt. viii. 3. ² St. Matt. viii. 13. ³ St. Matt. viii. 16, 17.

⁴ See 2 Cor. xiii. 4.

⁵ See 1 Peter ii. 24.

And this observation may help to explain to us the class of "infirmities" which is meant, when Almighty God is besought "mercifully" to "look upon our infirmities." The infirmities which Christ took were not moral or spiritual infirmities, but simply the results of these. He bore all the consequences of sin; but took neither our sin nor our sins. Not only did He never do a sinful act, but He had not a sinful nature. But all those weaknesses of the flesh which, though not themselves sinful, came in the train of the fall (just as a bodily fall sometimes entails broken limbs or injury to the spine, and may result in lifelong weakness), all these He did take, and underwent them as our Representative. As things are best understood by an example, I will mention the infirmities of human nature in reference to prayer. Does not each one of us know something of them by experience? Have we never found that the mind flies off at a tangent to earthly things, when we desire to fix it; that it easily tires of prayer; that it is cold, torpid, dead, especially when the bodily temperament is a little languid, and the animal spirits low? If we may not presume to say that our Blessed Lord experienced exactly these difficulties in prayer, yet that He did experience difficulties in connexion with it of a far more crushing kind, and that these difficulties came from the weakness of the flesh, which He took for our sakes, is absolutely certain. Did He not agonize in prayer in the garden, lest He should yield a single inch to the temptation which bade Him decline the cup of suffering; and did He not carry away, for and to His disciples, that lesson of lessons, which should be their pole-star of guidance in all their trials; "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but *the flesh is weak*"? ¹

¹ St. Matt. xxvi. 41.

Then, having at the right hand of God (observe the subtle, but very real, thread of connexion between the former and the latter part of the Collect), having at that "right hand," which we pray God to stretch forth in our behalf, a great High Priest who, having been in all points tempted like as we are, can be touched with a feeling of our infirmities,¹ we beseech the Almighty and Everlasting One to "look upon" or regard them "mercifully." It is the Church's paraphrase of the Psalmist's petition; "Have mercy upon me, O Lord; for I am weak."² One of the features of our own nature is, that nothing goes so directly to our hearts, and opens so readily our sympathies, as an appeal made to us, whether in words or mutely, from an utterly helpless object. An infant is the weakest and most helpless object in the world. And does not its very weakness and helplessness act as a powerful magnet to attract towards it the mother's sympathies? Will she feel the same tenderness for it, or watch over it with the same anxiety, when it is grown, and strong, and able to shift for itself? A sheep, which has fallen into a pit, or has been entangled in a thicket, is helpless; and do not its helpless bleatings pierce the shepherd's heart? Now man, though fallen since his creation, was made in the image of God. And we may apply to the matter before us our Blessed Lord's reasoning on a cognate subject, and say, "If we, then, being evil, know how to compassionate those whose weakness makes a *mute* appeal to us, how much more shall our heavenly Father, who is as good as He is powerful, look compassionately upon those who *plead with Him their* weakness?"³

But the heavenly Father will not content Himself with a merciful casting of His eyes upon His suppliants.

¹ See Heb. iv. 15.

² Psalm vi. 2.

³ See St. Luke xi. 13.

He will arise, and help them, and deliver them for His mercy's sake.¹ This is implied in the word translated "and," which is not the simple copulative, but an intensified form of it. *Atque* cannot be translated by a single English word; its force is, "Mercifully look, and"—not look only, but—"actively assist also." The benevolence of God, very unlike that of man, does not stop short in kindly emotions. He does not say, "Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled," without giving those things which are needful to the body.² A glow of generous feeling will never be substituted by such a God for an act of love.

"In all our dangers and necessities." This is the clause inserted by our Reformers, and an admirable one it is. The weakness of man's condition shows itself in two forms; he is exposed to perils, and liable to constantly recurring wants—bodily perils, from organic complaint, or from the air he breathes, or from accident; spiritual perils, from his own corrupt nature, from the moral atmosphere of the world, and from the assaults of spiritual foes—bodily wants, of food, raiment, medicine; spiritual wants, of grace, righteousness, pardon. This twofold form in which man's infirmity shows itself is assuredly no vain repetition; it is a real opening out of the thought of the Collect, which shows us how true and delicate a perception our Reformers had of the originals which they were dealing with.

"Stretch forth thy right hand." In the original it is, as I have said, the "right hand of thy Majesty," as the same words are actually translated in the Collect for the Third Sunday in Lent. Perhaps it would have been better to leave them so here. Better, not only because more literal and exact, but because "right hand of thy

¹ See Psalm xliv. 26, P.B.V.

² See St. James ii. 15, 16.

Majesty" awakens, somewhat more vividly than "thy right hand," associations with certain parts of Scripture which open out and illustrate the subject. We are told in the Epistle to the Hebrews that Christ, having "by himself purged our sins, sat down on *the right hand of the Majesty* on high."¹ The flesh (or human nature) of Christ, in which He bare our infirmities, is in its glorified state at God's right hand. Hence, when we approach God's throne, we may reasonably expect a response of sympathy. But God's right hand is a right hand of Majesty; and therefore we may reasonably expect also a response of power, help for our necessities, defence against our dangers. If an infirm Christ is full of sympathy, a glorified Christ is full of might. "The man of God's right hand,"² once "crucified through weakness," now "liveth by the power of God for us and towards us,"³ as He Himself says; "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen."⁴

At the time of His Second Advent He will come again in His own Person, to help His Church with an everlasting succour, and to give her perfect security against all dangers. So to His disciples of old, when their ship was buffeted with adverse winds, and they were toiling in rowing, He came down from the mount on which He had been praying for them, walking on the waves on which they were tossing.⁵ Not until that period, when "the Man of God's right hand" revisits our planet, will the prayer that He would stretch forth His right hand to help and defend us, receive its full and final answer. For the present the Holy Ghost acts as the agent and representative of Christ upon earth. Our Lord lives His own

¹ Heb. i. 3.² See Psalm lxxx. 17.³ See 2 Cor. xiii. 4.⁴ Rev. i. 18.⁵ See St. Matt. xiv. 24, 25.

life in us by the power of the Holy Ghost. And that involves the correction of the evil tendencies of our nature by grace, our protection from moral contagion by providence, and the counterplotting of our spiritual foes by the ministry of holy angels. It involves also the supply of our necessities, the means of grace and the making them available, the clothing of us with Christ's righteousness, the application to us of Christ's blood. Infirm ! We are infirm no longer, when the Spirit of Christ works mightily within us. He lifts up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees, doing for us the office which Aaron and Hur did for Moses.¹ He gives us power for that one great exercise of the spiritual life, which embraces every other—prayer. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities : for we know not what we should pray for as we ought : but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." ²

¹ See Exod. xvii. 11, 12.

² Rom. viii. 26.

CHAPTER XIV.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

○ God, who knowest us to be set in the midst of so many and great dangers, that by reason of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright; Grant to us such strength and protection, as may support us in all dangers, and carry us through all temptations; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Deus, qui nos in tantis periculis constitutos pro humana scis fragilitate non posse subsistere; da nobis salutem mentis et corporis, ut ea quae pro peccatis nostris patimur, te adjuvante vincamus. Per Dominum.—*Greg. Sac.—Miss. Sar.*

IN this Collect we come across a condition of things which we have not hitherto met with. The first half of the prayer is drawn from ancient sources. The latter half, which is the petition proper, was made new at the last Review of the Prayer Book in 1661. It was not the Reformers who made it new. *Their* Collect was throughout—the end as well as the beginning, the petition as well as the invocation—a translation of that which appears in the Sacramentary of Gregory. The petition, as translated by Cranmer, ran thus; “Grant to us the health of body and soul” (if the order of the Latin words were strictly observed, it would be, “Grant to us health of mind and body”), “that all those things which we suffer for sin, by thy help we may well pass and overcome: through Christ our Lord.” It is interesting

to consider why the Revisers of 1661 thought it well to alter this, as it is a very good and sound petition, and withal a very definite one. Perhaps the reason was that it was *too* definite, not sufficiently general, not applicable (in their judgment) to a sufficiently wide range of circumstances. And I think it must be admitted that, as a prayer for general use, they have much improved the Collect, while, at the same time, they have not destroyed or lost sight of the connexion which it had with the Gospel of the day—a connexion which very frequently subsists, but is often not so close as in the case before us. The Gospel consisted formerly of what now forms only the first part of it, St. Matthew's account of our Lord's stilling the tempest. Every part of the old Collect had a close reference to this incident. The "so great dangers in the midst of which God knoweth us to be set" (for the word "many" does not appear in the original Latin, but was put in by the translators), referred to the great danger which the disciples incurred from the tempest;—"they were filled with water, and *were in jeopardy*,"¹ says one of the accounts. "That by reason of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright," is an allusion to the momentary failure of the disciples' faith in the imminent peril into which the winds and the sea had brought them,—"*Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?*"² Then the "Grant to us health of mind and body" of the old petition alluded to what follows. According to St. Matthew's account of the miracle, our Lord first stilled the agitation of their minds before He calmed the fury of the elements. As soon as they had awoke Him, He said, "*Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?*" This sentence, together with the perfect serenity and self-pos-

¹ St. Luke viii. 23.

² St. Matt. viii. 26.

session of His manner, must have re-assured them, and given them a confidence that, whatever were the appearances, all would be well. Then, when He has instilled an inward calm into their hearts, He enjoins silence upon the blustering elements,—“he rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm,”¹—thus giving them health or safety of body, after He had restored their mental composure by confidence in Himself.—“That those things which we suffer for our sins, by thy help we may well pass and overcome.” This clause recognises, first, the truth that it is on account of sin that perils and risks beset man. Perils and risks came in, with other sorrows and distresses, in the train of sin. And the first thought which imminent peril suggests to sinners is that of their sins, which often sweep across the mind in that critical moment with a desolating force, and make them cast about for a mode of appeasing God’s wrath; as it was with Jonah’s shipmates, who “were afraid,” when their ship was in danger of going to pieces with the tempest,² and were taught very emphatically by Jonah himself that the storm must have its victim before it would sink to rest.³ The tempest at sea was, in Jonah’s case, a symbol of the wrath of God, as the fish was a symbol of Death or Hades; and the wrath of God is on account of sin. Secondly, these last words, “by thy help we may well pass and overcome,” contain an evident allusion to the happy issue of the whole incident,—to the safe passage of the disciples’ boat to the other side, where it came ashore in the country of the Gergesenes,⁴ and to their overcoming, through the Saviour’s re-animating words, the temptation which had beset them, and nearly made their faith to fail.

¹ St. Matt. viii. 26.

³ *Ibid.* i. 12.

² See Jonah i. 4, 5.

⁴ See St. Matt. viii. 28.

But now we must notice, as bearing on the point before us, the addition which our Reformers made to the Gospel for this day. Acting on their usual principle of somewhat lengthening the passages of Scripture which were read in the Services of the Church, they added on to the stilling of the tempest the account of the miracle wrought upon the Gergesene demoniacs. And most appropriately. For, first, the miracles actually followed one upon another, and are related as consecutive by all three Evangelists. Then, secondly, the sequence of thought from the stilling of the outward tempest to that in the frenzied mind of man is easy, natural, and beautiful; and point is given to it by the circumstance that one of the names given to demoniacs in the early Church was *οἱ χειμαζόμενοι*, "the tempest-tossed," or *κλυδωνιζόμενοι*, "the wave-tossed," in allusion to the stormy and uncontrollable impulses under which they laboured. And then again, if the Saviour was to be fully exhibited by the Epiphany Gospels in His manifestations of miraculous power, this could not be without including one instance of His casting out devils. But, of course, the adding a second miracle to the Gospel had a tendency to divide the attention of the reader between two different subjects; and, this being the case, the Revisers may well have thought it desirable somewhat to generalise the petition of the Collect, and to make it as widely applicable to human circumstances as possible.

"O God, who knowest us to be set in the midst of so many and great dangers, that by reason of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright." This is a most touching appeal to our heavenly Father. The Collect is set in quite the same key as the last, in which we beseech God to "look mercifully upon our infirmities,

and in all our dangers and necessities" to "stretch forth his right hand to help and defend us." On the words, "O God, who *knowest* us to be set," we may make the reflexion that, while God knows and sees the perils in which we are, we do not always know and see them ourselves, and that those perils are most perilous of which we are least conscious. Bodily dangers, indeed, like that arising from the storm at sea, force themselves, for the most part, on our consciousness. But we are often nearest to spiritual perils when we are least on our guard against them. In all strong excitements of mind, such, for example, as arise from anger and wounded vanity, it is exceedingly difficult, "by reason of the frailty of our nature," to "stand upright." And the best plan we can adopt is to do nothing and say nothing under the impulse, beyond crying to our Lord to still the tempest. Bishop Fisher recommended Princess Charlotte, in all fits of uncontrollable temper, never to open her lips until she had first repeated the Lord's Prayer mentally with as much seriousness and devotion as she could command.

"Grant to us such strength and protection, as may support us in all dangers, and carry us through all temptations." This clause is certainly a most skilful generalisation of the petition of the old Latin Collect. There the prayer was for health of mind and body. Here we ask for *such strength as may carry us through all temptations*,—that strength of Christ which is made perfect in our weakness,¹ and which alone can preserve us in faith and purity—that is, in a condition of *mental* health—and for *such protection as may support us*, and prevent our faith from failing, *in all dangers*. Here the health (or safety) of the body is glanced at, as in the

¹ See 2 Cor. xii. 9.

other phrase the health (or safety) of the mind. Both these things are almost equally necessary to us, that God should shield us internally and externally, fortifying our hearts by His grace, while at the same time He protects us from circumstances in which our faith would be too severely tried. We must bear in mind, however, that, while we ask for such protection, we must be very careful not to expose ourselves to the perils from which we ask to be protected. Dangers many and great we cannot indeed escape, but we may not "set" *ourselves* "in" them. We are insincere with God when we say to Him, "Lead us not into temptation," if we run into it freely, and will not avoid such company, such books, such amusements, such surroundings as our experience tells us are sure to bring it. Finally, do not fail to notice the force of the "*such*" in the words "*such* strength and protection." We ask for *daily bread*—that is, for *adequate* support, strength which meets our needs, no less and no more. Less would not serve the purpose; more we have no warrant for asking. Suffice it if the promise be fulfilled to us, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be."¹

In conclusion, can we fail, when we recite this Collect in connexion with the Gospel of the day, to think of our own branch of Christ's Church, which at present is as a little ship labouring in a heavy storm, and threatened by the most serious dangers, from false doctrine, from the virtual abandonment of doctrine, from defiance of authority, from hot controversies about nothing, from factions, and the disruption in which factions, if carried very far, must inevitably end? But believing, as we do, and as we think we have grounds for doing, that Christ is in the midst of her, we will be assured that He, in answer to the prayers

¹ Deut. xxxiii. 25.

of her faithful members, will "support" her "in all dangers, and carry her "through all temptations." "The waves of the sea are mighty, and rage horribly: but yet the Lord, who dwelleth on high, is mightier."¹ "The Lord sitteth above the water flood: and the Lord remaineth a King for ever."²

¹ Psalm xciii. 5, P.B.V.

² Psalm xxix. 9, P.B.V.

CHAPTER XV.

THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

O Lord, we beseech thee to keep thy Church and household continually in thy true religion; that they who do lean only upon the hope of thy heavenly grace may evermore be defended by thy mighty power; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Familiam tuam, quaesumus, Domine, continua pietate custodi; ut quae in sola spe gratiae coelestis innititur, tua semper protectione muniatur. Per.—*Greg. Sac.*
—*Miss. Sar.*

THE first part of this Collect, which contains its direct petition, is in the original Latin the same, word for word, as we find in the Collect for the Twenty-second Sunday after Trinity. The translators, however, have not given the same rendering in this as in that, though the words are precisely the same. I know not whether Cranmer and his colleagues, in their versions of these old devotional forms, were influenced by the same preference of a variety in the English words, even where the original exhibits no variety, which certainly seems to have guided the translators of the Bible at a later date. We can assign no better cause, in the case before us, for the different rendering of the same words. In the Collect for the Twenty-second Sunday after Trinity the petition runs; "Lord, we beseech thee to keep thy household the Church in continual godliness;" while here we have, "O Lord, we beseech thee to keep thy Church and household continu-

ally in thy true religion." "In thy true religion," as well as "in continual godliness," is, as I endeavour to show in my commentary on the later Collect, a mistranslation, and one which obliterates an idea which it is most important to preserve. The Latin is, in both cases, "continuâ pietate custodi," and the true rendering of this is; "Keep, we beseech thee, O Lord, thy household" (there is no "Church" in the original; people who use the Collect are supposed to understand that God's household *is* the Church) "continually with thy fatherly goodness." *Pietas* does not here mean, as it often does elsewhere, the sentiment of God's people towards Him (had this been meant, the preposition "in" would have made its appearance in the original); but *His* sentiment towards *them*,—that fatherly compassion, love, longing, and yearning, which moved Him to send His Son into the world to save the world, and which leads Him to watch over His Church more especially (that is, over the sanctified portion of mankind) with the tenderest solicitude, even as He watched over Israel in his pilgrimage through the wilderness—"he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye."¹ What a wonderful and effectual provision does Nature make for the keeping of the apple of the eye—that exceedingly delicate and sensitive organ, so essential both to the work of life and the enjoyment of life, which a grain of dust, falling into it, is able to torture and inflame. Not only is the whole apparatus overhung and sheltered by the brow, but with the first approach of danger, upon the slightest shock or concussion in the neighbourhood, or upon a sudden burst of light, the eyelid drops over the pupil, and the lashes with which it is fringed keep out most

¹ Deut. xxxii. 10.

effectually dust, and wet, and glare. Beautiful emblem of God's continual guardianship of His Church and people, of the keeping with fatherly goodness, and also "with perpetual mercy,"¹ which three of these old forms of devotion so touchingly solicit. Another image, under which God's guardianship of His Church is set forth to us in His inspired word, is that of keeping a vineyard. "In that day sing ye unto her, A vineyard of red wine. I the Lord do *keep* it; I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will *keep* it night and day."² Observe that the keeper of a vineyard who, in order to its continual superintendence, lives in a cottage or lodge upon the ground (compare, "And the daughter of Zion is left as *a cottage in a vineyard*, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers"³) is also its dresser and cultivator. "My Father is the husbandman," says our Lord, after speaking of Himself as the "true vine;" "every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."⁴ God's guardianship of His vineyard the Church includes, not only the keeping it from external enemies, but also the disciplining of it by His providence, and the fertilisation of it by the dews of His grace.

But we have not yet arrived at the exact figure under which God's guardianship is presented to us in this Collect. The prayer is that He would keep His *household* with His fatherly goodness continually. *Household*;—our Lord's parable at the close of His ministry, as given in St.

¹ See the Collect for the Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity; "Keep, we beseech thee, O Lord, thy Church *with thy perpetual mercy*;"—in the original, "Custodi, Domine, quæsumus, ecclesiam tuam *propitiatione perpetua*."

² Isaiah xxvii. 2, 3.

³ Isaiah i. 8.

⁴ St. John xv. 1, 2.

Mark xiii., exhibits this idea in a very striking form :
 “The Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore.”¹ This parable brings out another and a very important thought in reference to spiritual guardianship. It must be human as well as divine. Man must co-operate with God in bringing it about. All members of God’s household are enjoined, as they would be secure, to watch as well as pray.²

“ Watch, as if on that alone
 Hung the issue of the day ;
 Pray that help may be sent down ;
 Watch and pray.”

And God has “porters” in His household—ordained ministers—whose special function it is to give the alarm on the first threatening of error in doctrine and viciousness in principle.³ “Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain ;”⁴ and yet the watchman must wake, if the city is to be kept, since his watchfulness is the instrument which God makes use of in keeping it.

But in order to work out fully the idea presented in the Collect, we must observe that the members of God’s household are *children*, and, as children, they implore Him to “keep them,” or watch over them, “with fatherly goodness.” Children ;—yes, all children, but not all dutiful children. The Gospel of the day shows us tares growing side by side with wheat in the Church’s harvest-field.⁵ God has His prodigal sons, who have quitted the

¹ St. Mark xiii. 34, 35.

² See St. Matt. xxvi. 40, 41. ³ See Ezekiel iii. 17, 18, and xxxiii. 1-10.

⁴ Psalm cxxvii. 1.

⁵ St. Matt. xiii. 24-31.

household, and are living in a far country, away from home and its peace and plenty.¹ Yet even over these, in their voluntary exile, do His bowels of compassion yearn; His fatherly goodness has not forsaken them, but is instigating them, by an instinct of deep dissatisfaction, to return home. And when He catches a sight of them struggling back homeward, even when they are yet a great way off, He will run, and fall on their neck, and kiss them, giving them the welcome of "fatherly goodness," and watching over them now under the shadow of His roof.² Thus He keeps His Church "with *perpetual mercy*," according to the Collect for the Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity, as well as "with fatherly goodness," according to the Latin original of the Collect before us.

"That they who do lean only upon the hope of thy heavenly grace may evermore be defended by thy mighty power." In the original this clause is in the singular, which makes it hang together more closely with the petition; "Lord, we beseech thee to keep thy household continually with thy fatherly goodness, that she" (thy household) "who doth lean only upon the hope of thy heavenly grace may evermore be walled round by thy protection"—the feminine designation of the Church reminding one of that passage in the Canticles, "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?"³ Observe how both God's inward and outward assistances are pointed at in this beautiful aspiration,—His watering of the vineyard with the dews and rains of heaven, as well as His hedging it about against the intrusion of beasts who would spoil the vines.⁴ "Thy heavenly grace"—here are the dews and rains. "Walled by thy protection"—here is

¹ See St. Luke xv. 12, 13, 14, 17.

² See St. Luke xv. 20, etc.

³ Cant. viii. 5.

⁴ See Cant. ii. 15.

the hedging, and the looking to the hedge, the exercise of God's power over our circumstances, by which such temptation as might prove above our strength is warded off.¹

"They who do lean *only* upon the hope of thy heavenly grace." It is a very plaintive and piteous appeal, and one which God is perfectly sure to respond to, if it is made in sincerity. But do not imagine that the making it in sincerity is a very easy matter. To lean *only* upon the hope of God's heavenly grace, seeing it is the very foundation of all true religion, is what we cannot do by our natural power,—what I suppose no one ever does, without being first beaten completely out of trust in himself and his own resources. Every one who desponds in the spiritual combat, who allows himself to be very much disheartened by bad falls, shows by his discouragement that there still lurks in him the vice of self-trust, and that he is not leaning only upon the hope of heavenly grace. If he regarded his own strength and all manifestations of it, his resolutions, his enthusiasms, his vows of steadfast allegiance ("Although all shall be offended, yet will not I"²), as being mere and utter weakness, there would be no cause for surprise or despondency or passionate vexation, when he broke down. This passionate vexation means too often that people are disappointed in themselves, and their vanity is wounded.³

"They who do lean only upon the hope of thy heavenly grace." It must be a well-grounded hope; otherwise it will be like a broken reed when it is leant upon. And upon what then is it grounded? Upon

¹ See 1 Cor. x. 13.

² St. Mark xiv. 29.

³ See this thought beautifully pursued, and drawn out at length, in Chaps. II. III. IV. of Lorenzo Scupoli's *Spiritual Combat* (London: Burns and Lambert, 1856).

God's omnipotence, which must be more than a match for the corruption of our nature and our spiritual foes. Upon God's wisdom, which knows perfectly our character, our past history, our present circumstances. Upon God's love, which can overcome all obstacles in the way of our salvation, since it moved Him to give His own Son for a world lying in wickedness and defying Him.¹ And, finally, upon the sympathy of the good Shepherd, who cannot possibly desert the sheep for which He laid down His life, when He hears it crying to Him out of the midst of spiritual discomfiture and distress.² And what assurance may we have that this power, this wisdom, this love, this sympathy, are not only diffused abroad (like the sunlight) for the benefit of mankind at large, but also centred upon us individually? The assurance given us by our Baptism, when we were washed in the laver of regeneration and formally entitled to the renewing of the Holy Ghost.³ They who lean only upon the hope of this Covenant made with them by the Almighty, All-wise, All-loving One, shall assuredly have salvation secured to them by the mighty power of God and the intercession of their Saviour. "Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks."⁴

¹ See St. John iii. 16 ; 1 John v. 19 ; St. Luke xix. 14.

² See St. Luke xv. 4.

³ See Titus iii. 5, 6.

⁴ Isaiah xxvi. 1.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

¶ God, whose blessed Son was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil, and make us the sons of God, and heirs of eternal life ; Grant us, we beseech thee, that, having this hope, we may purify ourselves, even as he is pure ; that, when he shall appear again with power and great glory, we may be made like unto him in his eternal and glorious kingdom ; where with thee, O Father, and thee, O Holy Ghost, he liveth and reigneth, ever one God, world without end. Amen. [A.D. 1661.]

IN the Missal of Sarum, which may be called the most popular Communion Service of the English Church before the Reformation, no special provision was made for a Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany. The arrangement was this. On the Sunday which fell within the Octave of the Epiphany, and which we now call the First Sunday after the Epiphany, the Collect of the Festival was repeated. The Sundays following, of which there were five, were reckoned, not from the Epiphany itself, but from the Octave ; first Sunday, second Sunday after the Octave of the Epiphany, etc. etc. At the Reformation this arrangement was altered to the simpler and more natural one of making the Sundays date from the Festival itself ; but, in case of there being in any year six Sundays after the Epiphany, the last had no special provision made for it ; but a rubric appeared, ordering that “the sixth Sunday (if there be so many) shall have the same

“Psalm” (Introit), “Collect, Epistle, and Gospel that was upon the fifth.” So things continued down to the time of the final Revision in 1661—a period of 112 years—and then Bishop Cosin drew up our present Collect, Epistle, and Gospel for the Sixth Sunday, not only adding thereby to the body of the old Collects a prayer of great beauty, and every way worthy of its position, but showing a keen appreciation of the *rationale* of Church seasons, which we cannot too much admire.

For, with this finishing stroke put to the series, wonderful is the significance of the Epiphany Gospels. The Gospel for the Festival itself rehearses the manifestation of Christ in infancy to the wise men. The Gospel for the First Sunday recounts His manifestation in childhood to the doctors in the temple. Then follow the records of His miraculous manifestations, the earliest of all that at Cana of Galilee, of which miracle it is distinctly said that thereby Jesus “manifested forth His glory.”¹ The miraculous cures of the Jewish leper and of the Gentile centurion’s servant follow in the Gospel for the Third Sunday. The miraculous calming of the stormy sea, and of the still more stormy demoniacs, forms the subject of the Gospel for the Fourth Sunday. The manifestation of Christ in the Church, where there is ever a mixture of good and evil—tares and wheat in the same harvestfield—is brought before us in the fifth Gospel. There was wanted surely, to close the series, a description of the final manifestation of Christ “in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory.”² And this has been given us by Bishop Cosin’s master-hand in the Gospel for the Sixth Sunday, and is referred to with great solemnity and magnificence in the

¹ St. John ii. 11.

² St. Matt. xxiv. 30.

associated Collect, which is probably the finest devotional piece we have of the era of the Restoration.

“O God, whose blessed Son was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil ;” an inweaving into the Collect of the text in St. John’s First Epistle, “For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy” (literally “loose,” apply a solvent to) “the works of the devil.”¹ Christ always appears in the Gospels as the personal antagonist of Satan, struggling with him throughout, and eventually triumphing over him gloriously. He foils him thrice with the sword of God’s word in the Temptation ;² He detects his suggestion beneath the soft speech, which inclined Him to shrink from the cross, and repudiates it with horror.³ He is continually casting out devils, and rescuing from their thralldom the souls and bodies of men. When His end approached, He recognised Satan as girding himself up for his final and most formidable assault ;⁴ and when about to leave His disciples, the legacy which He bequeathed to them, the Elijah’s mantle, which may be said to have floated down from His ascending form on their shoulders, was this ; “In my name they shall cast out devils.”⁵

But it might, perhaps, be thought that, as demoniacal possession is commonly supposed to exist no longer, men generally have but little concern with this triumph of Christ over the powers of darkness. Any such conclusion is entirely precluded by another statement of the Epistle, to the effect that “Christ was manifested to take away our sins.”⁶

¹ 1 John iii. 8.

² See St. Matt. iv. 4, 7, 10.

³ See St. Matt. xvi. 21, 22, 23.

⁴ See St. John xiv. 30 ; and St. Luke xxii. 53.

⁵ St. Mark xvi. 17.

⁶ 1 John iii. 5.

Observe that this is a nearer object of His manifestation,—one not lying so far back in the horizon of the Divine purpose as that of destroying the works of the devil. “He was manifested to take away our sins.” But who is the author of sin? who first introduced it into human life? who first envenomed our nature with it as with a viper’s poison? “That old serpent, which is the Devil.”¹ Sin, and sin only, constitutes the devil’s hold upon every man. And this hold it is which Christ was manifested to loosen. He loosens it by His blood and grace. First, by His blood, whereby “a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction” was made for sin. Death, to which mankind had been consigned as the penalty of sin, was the Goliath’s sword wherewith the devil mowed down the successive generations of the human race. The death of Christ, instigated by the devil, was the great means of defeating the devil, inasmuch as it was a propitiation for the sins of the whole world. And thus our David with Goliath’s sword cut off Goliath’s head;² and so it is written that “through death he destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil,”³ and that, “having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in the cross.”⁴ Secondly, Christ applies a solvent to the works of the devil,—loosens the hold which sin has over us,—by His grace. This grace, or, in other words, the influence of His Holy Spirit, saps and undermines our love of sin, and thus breaks the yoke wherewith Satan hath bound us so fast from our birth, that we cannot lift up ourselves towards God, and enjoy that blessed communion with Him, which is to the soul what the fresh air and the glorious sunshine are to the bodily frame.

¹ Rev. xx. 2.² See 1 Sam. xvii. 51.³ Heb. ii. 14.⁴ Col. ii. 15.

“And make us the sons of God, and heirs of eternal life.” Observe that Christ’s manifestation has a twofold aspect. It is both destructive and creative, destructive of sin, which is the devil’s work, and creative of Divine sonship. I say creative of sonship, because, though man, by the original construction of his nature, was a son of God, he forfeited his sonship by the admission of sin; and it has to be restored to him by the Sacrament of Baptism, and by the revelation to him of the fatherly love of God in Christ. When he lays hold of this revelation by faith, the Spirit of adoption within him cries, “Abba, Father,”¹ and draws him for everything he needs to the throne of grace, thus enabling him to realise his baptism. And heirship goes with sonship as a matter of course, according to that word to the Romans and Galatians, “If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ;”² “If a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”³

“Grant us, we beseech thee, that, having this hope, we may purify ourselves, even as he is pure.” This is the clause in the petition of the Collect, which corresponds to the destructive aspect of Christ’s manifestation mentioned previously. “As Christ was manifested to destroy sin by His blood and grace, grant that we, co-operating with His grace, may destroy sin.” And observe how completely St. Paul’s language in the Second Epistle to the Corinthians harmonizes with St. John’s. “Every man that hath this hope in Christ,” says the latter, “purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”⁴ “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved,” says St. Paul,—that God will be a Father and a God to us, if we separate ourselves from the unclean thing,—fastening upon these promises our faith and hope,—“let us

¹ See Gal. iv. 6; and Rom. viii. 15.

² Rom. viii. 17.

³ Gal. iv. 7.

⁴ 1 John iii. 3.

yet deliver us.”¹ And this shows us the answer to a question, which naturally suggests itself in reviewing this Collect, namely, how the two parts of it hang together,—how is the petition for defence against all adversity connected with the plea that “we put not our trust in anything that we do”? The answer is that, when a man is beaten out of his own resources, then, and not till then, it is that he puts his whole trust in God. And trust in God it is,—in His wisdom, providence, love, and protecting care,—which enlists the power of God in our behalf, and makes Him our auxiliary. When the sense of our infirmities is strong upon us, so that we confess from the ground of our heart our own nothingness, then it is that “the power of Christ”² most signally rests on us,—then it is that the Red Sea of our troubles cleaves asunder before us, and a way is opened for us to march through dry shod.³ And so we realise in *our* experience the great truth, which “the teacher of the Gentiles” realised in *his*; “When I am weak, then am I strong.”⁴

¹ 2 Cor. i. 9, 10.

² See 2 Cor. xii. 9.

³ See Exod. xiv. 13, 14, 21, 22, and 1 Cor. x. 13.

⁴ 2 Cor. xii. 10.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE SUNDAY CALLED QUINQUAGESIMA, OR, THE NEXT SUNDAY BEFORE LENT.

☉ Lord, who hast taught us that all our doings without charity are nothing worth; Send thy Holy Ghost, and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of charity, the very bond of peace and of all virtues, without which whosoever lieth is counted dead before thee: Grant this for thine only Son Jesus Christ's sake. Amen. [A.D. 1549.]

THE old Latin Collect,¹ for which our Reformers in 1549 wisely substituted this most beautiful production of their own pen, may be thus translated; "O Lord, we beseech thee favourably to hear our prayers, and, having loosed us by absolution from the bonds of our sins, defend us from all adversity." Two good reasons offered themselves for discarding this old form. First, one of the clauses had reference to an exploded, or at least an expiring, custom. This was the custom of confessing and being absolved (or getting shriven²) on Shrove Tuesday, in preparation for the Lenten Communion, by which shrift it was sought to sanctify the forty days' fast. When the shriving on Shrove Tuesday fell into abeyance, and the day lost its

¹ Preces nostras, quæsumus, Domine, clementer exaudi; atque a peccatorum vinculis absolutos, ab omni adversitate custodi. Per Dominum. —*Miss. Sar.*

² To "shrive" is the Saxon word *scrifan*, which means to receive a confession, administer the Sacrament of Penance.

religious character, and (strangely enough) became a day of sports and merriment, as if the mind could not bear the long strain of Lenten gravity and seriousness, unless it were first relieved by a burst of extravagant hilarity, it was thought well to dispense with all allusions to a custom now honoured in the breach rather than in the observance. Secondly, the original Collect betrayed some poverty of thought, the ideas in it having been presented to the worshipper's mind in the two weeks previously. Its first part was the same as that of the Septuagesima Collect; its latter part the same as that of Sexagesima. The infusion of some new blood into this old series of Prayers was here also, as in Advent, felt to be necessary. And accordingly our Reformers framed a new Collect out of the Epistle for the day, thus bringing that noble passage of Holy Scripture into higher relief in connexion with the Lenten season, on the margin of which we are standing.

Let us not omit to observe in the first place the interesting thread of connexion which links together (by design, I have no doubt) this Collect with its predecessor. In the Sexagesima Prayer we were taught that no trust can be put in human doings, even were they the labours of a St. Paul, undergone in the cause of the Gospel, and for the sake of the Lord Jesus;—"O Lord God, who seest that we put not our trust in anything that we do." Here the lesson upon which the prayer is built is, that these "doings," which break down under us when we lean upon them, are "without charity nothing worth,"—of no avail. This, of course, is one of the reasons why they cannot be trusted to. The verse of the Epistle to which reference is made is the third; "And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor" (break it all up into morsels,

and dole it out in meals to the hungry),¹ “and though I give my body to be burned” (like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, of whom it is said that “they yielded their bodies,” a phrase which I cannot doubt to have been in the Apostle’s mind), “and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.”² Martyrdom is the climax of human “doings” towards God. Almsgiving, when it involves the sacrifice of everything we possess, is the climax of human “doings” towards man. St. Matthew, who closed his ledger at the call of Christ, and, having made out of his gains a great feast in honour of the Master,³ then threw what remained into the common stock, from which our Lord and His disciples were supported; St. Stephen, who yielded his body to be stoned in bearing testimony to Christ’s truth,—these went as far as it is possible to men to go in the way of virtuous doing. Their doings, we know, were prompted by love, and through God’s mercy gloriously recompensed with the crown of righteousness. But could such acts as theirs be done *without love*? Certainly such a case is conceivable; for otherwise the Apostle would not contemplate it. And for this plain reason. A man’s goods are not himself. A man’s body, although a part of his nature, is not himself. He, therefore, who gives his substance or who gives his body to God and his fellow-creatures, does

¹ Ἐὰν ψωμίσω πάντα τὰ ὑπάρχοντά μου. The verb ψωμίζω (exclusively Pauline, used in the New Testament only here and in Rom. xii. 20) means to break up food into ψωμοί, morsels or mouthfuls. Dean Stanley, in his *Commentary on the Corinthians* (vol. i. p. 277 [London: 1855]), very appositely quotes a MS. note of Coleridge on this passage:—“The true and most significant sense is, ‘Though I dole away in mouthfuls all my property or estates.’ Who that has witnessed the almsgiving in a Catholic monastery, or in the court of a Spanish or Sicilian bishop’s or archbishop’s palace, where immense revenues are syringed away in farthings to herds of beggars, but must feel the force of the Apostle’s half satirical ψωμίσω?”

² 1 Cor. xiii. 3.

³ See St. Luke v. 27, 28, 29.

not *necessarily* give himself. "My son," it is said, "give me thine heart,"¹ which *is* thyself. And again, "If a man would give all the substance of his house for" (instead of) "love, it would utterly be contemned."² A feudal baron, who, under the impression (unhappily fostered by the theology of his times) that he might by such a sacrifice atone for his sins, and save his soul alive, gave all his substance to found and endow an hospital or a church, and then withdrew into a cloister to live on a pittance all his days,—did he act in love? Of very many who actually did such things, we are bound to hope and believe the very best. Still the case is perfectly conceivable of a man ignorant and superstitious, driven by urgent terrors of conscience to part with all his substance, not because he cared for the poor, nor indeed for God, but merely because he cared for himself, and had been led to bethink him seriously what might befall him after death. And among heathen nations many a Dervish has been found to yield his body to the most frightful and prolonged forms of torture, with the view of lifting himself into a state of perfection and transcendent beatitude, while the very endurance has bred in him an ascetic pride and contempt of others, which is the very reverse of love. O let us see to it that we give our hearts to God in love, to our neighbour in sympathy! With this supreme gift, the widow's mite is accepted and recompensed. Without it, the largest offerings of the rich men to the treasury are nothing accounted of.

"Send thy Holy Ghost, and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of charity." We must travel here out of the Epistle for a Scriptural reference; for nowhere in it is the agency of the Blessed Spirit in producing love

¹ Prov. xxiii. 26.

² Cant. viii. 7.

explicitly mentioned. But we are expressly told in the Epistle to the Galatians that "the fruit of the Spirit,"—the earliest result of His working—"is love."¹ And in Romans v., which was doubtless the passage principally in the thoughts of the composer of the Collect, we read, "hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."² Persons tolerably familiar with the exposition of St. Paul's Epistles are well aware that there is a great question among interpreters of Holy Scripture as to whether the love of God, of which the Apostle here speaks as shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, is to be understood as *our* love towards Him, or *His* love towards us. It certainly would seem as if the framer of the Collect took rather the former than the latter view... The love which we are taught to pray for as an "excellent gift," must be, one would think, a certain sentiment of the human heart towards both God and our neighbour. It is, however, very doubtful whether, when St. Paul speaks of the shedding abroad of the love of God in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, he does not rather mean the shedding abroad there of a lively sense of God's love to us. And probably he interprets most safely and soundly both the Scriptural passage, and the petition of the Collect founded upon it, who holds that the expression "love of God" in the text, and the equivalent expression "most excellent gift of charity" in the Collect, should be understood both of God's love to us and ours to Him,—of the first as the source and essence of the second. "We love him," says St. John, "because he first loved us."³ Our love for Him bears to His for us exactly the same relation which the moonlight bears to the sun-

¹ Gal. v. 22.² Rom. v. 5.³ 1 John iv. 19.

light. Moonlight is not only caused by sunlight; it is sunlight reflected from the moon. Similarly our love to God is only the sense of His love to us; or, in other words, it is His own love reflected back upon Him from the hearts into which He has shed it abroad. And hence I paraphrase thus the petition of the Collect; "Pour into our hearts by thy Spirit such a sense of thy love to us, as may lead us to love thee, and man for thy sake."

"The very bond of peace and of all virtues." Here, too, the Collect-writer gives us incidentally his interpretation of certain passages of Holy Scripture. The first of these is to be found in the Epistle to the Ephesians—"endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."¹ Origen, expounding this phrase, "bond of peace," speaks of "love binding together those who are united according to the Spirit."² The Collect-writer takes the same view of the meaning as Origen. Seeing that it is love which holds together the true children of God, he thinks that by the phrase "bond of peace" is meant "love." And this, though not the only possible explanation of the phrase, is a very old and very good one.—But what are we to make of the "bond of all virtues?" Observe, first, that the "virtues" here are "the doings" of the earlier part of the Collect,—the alms-givings, the endurances, and the labours, at which we have already glanced as being nothing worth without love. These virtues need something to bind them together, so that they may not drop off from us and fall away. The reference is to Colossians iii. 14, where, after enumerating divers graces, which he exhorts Christians to put on,

¹ Eph. iv. 3.

² τῆς ἀγάπης συνδεούσης κατὰ τὸ Πνεῦμα ἐνουμένων (quoted by Ellicott in his Commentary on the Epistle, from Cramer's "Catena").

“kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering,” and so forth, he adds: “And above all these things” (rather, *over* them all, as a girdle, or outer garment, is put on *over* our other dress) “put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness,” that is, the power which unites and holds together the various graces which constitute perfection. Without love the virtues and elements of perfection are a detached series,—like the members of a body, when severed from one another, and hastening to decay and dissolution, just because they are not held together by the one principle of animal life. And when our Lord was asked which was the great commandment of the law,¹ He did not name (probably much to the surprise of His questioner) any one of the ten; but simply announced the first of all the commandments as being that which prescribes perfect love to God, and the second that which prescribes the loving our neighbour as ourselves. Honesty, chastity, dutifulness, kindness, watchfulness over our words, observance of the Sabbath, reverence and devotion, the calling upon God, the keeping of ourselves from idols, are, without love to vitalise and quicken them, the decaying elements of a morality, whose various parts have nothing to hold them in union.

And thus we pass by a natural sequence of thought to the last clause; “Without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before thee.” A strong assertion indeed. Can it be justified by Holy Scripture? Most conclusively and abundantly. “God is love,”² we are twice solemnly assured; and, therefore, he who lives without love,—lives only an animal and an intellectual life—must be counted dead before Him, since love constitutes God’s life, His most essential life. And therefore we read; “He that

¹ See St. Mark xii. 28-32.

² 1 John iv. 8, 16.

loveth not his brother abideth in death ;”¹ because the life of God, which is the true life of all rational creatures,—the life of love,—has never been quickened in such an one. And again we hear from one Apostle that “faith without works is dead,”² which is just tantamount to what another tells us ; “though I have all faith, . . . and have not charity, I am nothing.”³ For when St. James speaks of works as the vitalising principle of a religious profession, he clearly means works, not as separate and detached virtues, but as wrought into a living organism by love, works which express and betoken the life of love, that life which is akin to, and indeed is a scintillation from God’s life, and in the absence of which “whosoever liveth is counted dead before” Him.

¹ 1 John iii. 14.² James ii. 20.³ 1 Cor. xiii. 2.

CHAPTER XX.

THE FIRST DAY OF LENT, COMMONLY CALLED ASH WEDNESDAY.

Almighty and everlasting God, who hatest nothing that thou hast made, and dost forgive the sins of all them that are penitent; Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we worthily lamenting our sins, and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of thee, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. [A.D. 1549.]

THIS Collect may be said to have made its earliest appearance in the First Prayer Book of Edward VI. (A.D. 1549). For, though its invocation and first clause seem to have been borrowed from one of the mediæval Collects which were used at the benediction of the ashes on Ash Wednesday¹ (before they were laid on the heads of members

¹ This benediction, with its preceding rubric, ran as follows :—

Deinde fiat benedictio cinerum sine Dominus vobiscum et sine Oremus, sacerdote ad orientem converso.

Oratio.

Omnipotens sempiterne Deus, qui misereris omnium, et nihil odisti eorum quæ fecisti, dissimulans peccata hominum propter poenitentiam; qui etiam subvenis in necessitate laborantibus; bene-✠dicere et sancti-✠ficare hos cineres dignare, quos causa humilitatis et sanctæ

Then let the benediction of the ashes be made, without The Lord be with you, and without Let us pray, the priest turning to the East.

Almighty and everlasting God, who hast compassion upon all men, and hatest nothing that thou hast made, and dost not impute the sins of men by reason of their penitence; who also dost succour those who labour in necessity; Vouchsafe to bless ✠ and sancti-✠fy these ashes,

of the congregation with the words, "Remember, man, that thou art ashes, and unto ashes shalt thou return"), the body of the prayer—its petition and aspiration—are quite new, and inculcate most important doctrine.

"Almighty and everlasting God." "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God."¹ One object of the prayer being to produce and foster in the heart a feeling of profound humiliation, those attributes of Almighty God are appropriately recited in the opening clause, which bring before us His Majesty and loftiness. He is omnipotent; He is everlasting; His being has no limits, but reaches from the past into the future Eternity.

"Who hatest nothing that thou hast made." The implication here is, though the thought is not expressed, "however man may have abused and spoiled it." Man's nature became, by the fall, debased and depraved, blinded

religionis ad emundanda delicta nostra super capita nostra more Ninevitarum ferre constituisti; et da per invocationem sancti tui nominis, ut omnes qui eos ad deprecandam misericordiam tuam super capita sua tulerint, a te mereantur omnium delictorum suorum veniam accipere, et hodie eorum inchoare sancta jejunia, ut in die Resurrectionis purificatis mentibus ad sanctum mereantur accedere Pascha, et in futuro perpetuam accipere gloriam. Per Dominum.

which thou hast appointed us to bear upon our heads after the manner of the Ninevites, in token of humiliation and holy devotion, and in order to the washing away of our offences; and, by this invocation of thy holy name, grant that all those who shall bear them upon their heads, to implore thereby thy mercy, may obtain from thee [both] the pardon of all their offences, and [also] grace so to begin to-day their holy fasts, that on the day of the Resurrection they may be counted worthy to approach to the holy Paschal feast, and hereafter to receive everlasting glory. Through the Lord.

¹ Psalm xc. 2.

and hardened. And in the exercise of his free will he has reduced it to a lower pitch of depravity and debasement, so that an unbelieving and impenitent man, who rejects God's offers of grace, tramples under foot His laws, and defies His judgments, might seem to be an object of God's aversion. God, however, hates not him, but the sin that is in him. There are noble capacities in man, however depraved and debased—capacities of mind and heart—which God would gladly see unfolded in His service. Our nature was originally made with exquisite skill for the enjoyment of no lower an end than that of communion with God. And God cannot bear to see His handiwork spoiled and lost. There is something analogous to this feeling in our own minds. Could a painter, a statuary, a poet, bear to see the productions, on which they had stamped the impress of their genius, consigned to the flames, or dashed or torn to pieces? There is a very beautiful and tender tie, binding us to the heart of God, which grows out of our creaturely relationship to Him. One of the old saints used continually to plead this tie with God in the touching words, "*Qui me plasmasti, miserere mei*,"—"Thou who hast moulded and formed me, have compassion on me." He hateth nothing that He hath made, but sees in it its great capacity under all its superinduced baseness. "*He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.*"¹

"And dost forgive the sins of all them that are penitent." It is a wise policy in prayer to lay down, in the first instance, some word of God, some Scriptural promise, as a groundwork on which our petition may rise. Thus shall we build our prayer stably and firmly, and effectually

¹ St. Matt. v. 45.

obtain what we ask. The Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testaments, abound with promises to repentance. The passage in the first Chapter of Isaiah, where we are exhorted to "wash and make" us "clean," to "put away the evil of" our "doings from before" God's "eyes," to "cease to do evil" and "learn to do well," with the assurance which is given to those who do so, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool,"¹ is perhaps the grandest, in point of style, of all these promises. And lest any one should say that under the Gospel, where faith more especially comes into view, repentance is superseded as a condition of pardon, St. Peter, in the second sermon delivered by him after the descent of the Holy Ghost, says, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out."²

"Create and make in us new and contrite hearts." The phraseology is drawn from the fifty-first Psalm, where you find, in connexion with the same subject, the words "Create," "renew," and "contrite heart." "*Create* in me a clean heart, O God; and *renew* a right spirit within me. . . . The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a *contrite heart*, O God, thou wilt not despise."³ Prayers of this kind imply that repentance, if a duty of man, is also the special gift of God; that it is not due so much to human endeavour, as to the Divine blessing upon that endeavour. And accordingly it is written, "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."⁴ Forgiveness of sins, it will be admitted, is clearly a Divine gift. Observe, then, that in

¹ Vers. 16, 17, 18.

² Acts iii. 19.

³ Psalm li. 10, 17.

⁴ Acts v. 31.

this passage repentance is spoken of as being equally so. It comes no less of God's gift that a man repents, than that, upon repentance, his sins are blotted out. How effectually is boasting excluded!

Then, again, consider the words "Create and make." To make is to manufacture. To create is to produce out of nothing. The language is designed to show, in the most forcible and emphatic manner, that there are in us by nature no rudiments at all of the new and contrite heart; that it has to be formed within us by the brooding of the Spirit of God upon the shapeless chaos of a heart void of good. You would not say that rocks had any affinity with water, nor flint-stones with wells. Rather it is the property of the flint-stone, when struck, to engender, not water, but fire. So neither is there any affinity to penitence, no element or rudiment of it, in the heart of fallen man. There is no fear of God driving him, there is no love of God drawing him, to it. How then in such a heart is repentance to be engendered? By an exertion of His creative power, "who turned the hard rock into a standing water, and the flint-stone into a springing well."¹ He has no less power over the hard and flinty heart, to elicit from it the well-spring of penitential tears.

And perhaps we may learn from the word "create" this further lesson, that, just as St. Paul speaks of that which was lacking in the *faith* of the Thessalonians being perfected,² so repentance also has various stages of advancement, and admits of being more and more developed, and at length perfected. For certainly the fair structure of the natural creation was not built up in a day. It had first its light, then its firmament, then its earth and sea, then its luminaries, then its fish and fowl, then its land

¹ Psalm cxiv. 8, P.B.V.

² See 1 Thess. iii. 10.

animals, until, finally, man appeared, inspired by God's own breath, to crown the whole.

"That we worthily lamenting our sins." Note the word "worthily," how carefully chosen it is. The sorrow of the best of us for our sins is by no means adequate; worldly losses and disappointments—nay, sometimes, losses and disappointments of a trifling character—awaken in us a much livelier and deeper sentiment of concern. Therefore we pray that we may lament our sins *worthily*,—in a manner worthy of the insult offered to God, and of the risk and damage incurred to our own souls thereby.—Yet observe, on the other hand, that the expression is duly weighed,—that there is nothing exaggerated in it. Some people have prayed that they might be able to see their sins in the same light in which God sees them,—an indiscreet and ill-considered prayer; for surely if we saw our sins with the eye of Infinite Holiness, the spectacle, so far from being a benefit to us, would drive us to despair. There is something modest and suitable in the word "worthily;"—not falling short of the due proportion, but, on the other hand, not exceeding it. It may also be observed upon this clause that a "worthy" lamentation of sins is such as leads on to repentance. Repentance is not sorrow for sin, as the Apostle warns us, but the fruit of sorrow for sin. "Godly sorrow,"—not is, but—"worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of."¹ That sorrow, and that alone, is "worthy" and adequate, which leads to, and issues in, the change of mind and heart called repentance.

"And acknowledging our wretchedness." The "wretchedness" is the original corruption of our nature—the sin that is in us, as distinct from "our sins"—and also the

¹ 2 Cor vii. 10.

still worse and more hopeless plight into which we have fallen by actual transgression. Observe again the accuracy and propriety of the diction. As to our "sins," we are to lament them; as to our "wretchedness," we are to acknowledge it. The former we do, when we use the earlier part of the General Confession; the latter we do, when we say, "There is no health in us," or, with the Psalmist, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."¹

"May obtain of thee, the God of all mercy, *perfect* remission and forgiveness." The *perfect* remission balances and corresponds to the *worthy* lamentation. If the lamentation and acknowledgment are worthy, if they have led on to repentance, they will win a *perfect* remission. Ahab humbled himself before God, on the denunciation of God's wrath; and because he humbled himself, God remitted the sentence upon his sin during Ahab's lifetime, and postponed it to the days of his son;² but this was not a *perfect* remission. "Even thereafter as a man feareth, so is" God's "displeasure;"³ and therefore in proportion as a man's dread of God's judgment is lively and keen, in that proportion does God remit His wrath.—Or we may understand *perfect* remission and forgiveness as meaning *final and eventual acquittal*. The penitent believer is at present in the fullest enjoyment of pardon through the blood of Christ. God's still small voice within him whispers this pardon, and his conscience re-echoes the whisper. As a further assurance, he has the word of Ministerial Absolution, the exercise of the power which the Lord committed to His Church, when He said, "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them."⁴ But all

¹ Psalm li. 5.

² See 1 Kings xxi. 29.

³ Psalm xc. 11, P. B. V.

⁴ St. John xx. 23.

this falls short of the final sentence of acquittal at the last day, when the man shall give account of himself to God, and his faith shall be shown to have been genuine by his works, and his name shall be seen inscribed in the book of life,¹ on its being solemnly opened before an assembled universe. Then the remission which has been whispered in the conscience, and proclaimed in the Church militant, shall be published in the Church triumphant, and thus become "perfect."

"Remission and forgiveness"—are they one and the same thing? One and the same thing doubtless; but under different aspects. Forgiveness is of an offence; if you injure me, I forgive you. Remission is of a debt; if you owe me a sum of money, I remit it. So that the two-fold expression carries us back to the Lord's Prayer, St. Matthew's version of which has "Forgive us our debts,"² while St. Luke's version runs, "Forgive us our sins;"³—remission and forgiveness. By sin we incur a debt to God, for we owe obedience to His law; and sin is the non-payment of this obedience. By sin, too, we incur a debt of punishment to the Divine Justice; having been wrong-doers, we ought to suffer the penalty. Both these debts our Blessed Lord has paid in full. By His life He yielded to the Law, in our nature, and as our Representative, a perfect obedience. By His death He endured the penalty of the Law. God enable us so truly to repent and believe in Him, that His merits and precious death may be applied to us for our justification and acceptance, both in this world and in that which is to come!

¹ See Rev. xx. 12.

² St. Matt. vi. 12.

³ St. Luke xi. 4.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT.

☉ Lord, who for our sake didst fast forty days and forty nights ;
Give us grace to use such abstinence, that, our flesh being subdued to
the Spirit, we may ever obey thy godly motions in righteousness,
and true holiness, to thy honour and glory, who livest and reignest
with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end.
Amen. [A.D. 1549.]

THIS is one of the three Collects addressed to our Lord, the other two being those for the Third Sunday in Advent, and for St. Stephen's Day. The three may all be counted as new Collects, only the nucleus of our present Collect for St. Stephen's Day having been derived from the Sarum Missal, and the larger part of it being due to the Revisers of 1661. The Third in Advent was also their work ; but that on which we are at present engaged was composed by the Reformers in 1549. The reason why they discarded the Sarum Collect for the First Sunday in Lent may have been that it spoke of Lent rather too pointedly as a Divine ordinance,¹ and a part of God's instrumentality

¹ Deus, qui ecclesiam tuam annua Quadragesimali observatione purificas : præsta familiæ tuæ, ut quod a te obtinere abstinendo nititur, hoc bonis operibus exequatur. Per.—*Miss. Sar.*

O God, who purifiest thy Church by the yearly observance of the Lenten fast : Grant unto thy household, that it may follow out in good works those [holy inspirations], which it endeavours to obtain from thee by abstinence. Through.

See Bingham's exhaustive disquisition on the Quadragesimal or Lent fast ["Antiquities," Book XXI. Chap. I.]: "But many of the ancients

in the kingdom of grace. It was a safer course to refer the idea of the institution to our Lord's fast of forty days, recorded by the three first Evangelists, while speaking of the obligation of fasting in such general terms as should not imply that any particular period of time was prescribed by Divine authority.

As to the Collect's being addressed to our Lord, we may here usefully recapitulate what has been previously said on this point. One reason why Collects were very rarely addressed to the Son of God (a feature of them which may be observed in the use of the Church before the Reformation, as well as in our present Prayer Book) probably was, that the Office of the Holy Communion, of which the Collect is a main feature, is a commemoration of the Sacrifice of Christ, and a representation of that Sacrifice in the Church on earth. Now the Sacrifice of Christ was offered to the Father through and by the Son ; and, therefore, as the Office has the sacrificial thought everywhere pervading it, the natural and regular order of things is that all the prayers used in it should be addressed to the Father through the Son. A good account can be given of the deviations from this order which our Prayer Book exhibits. In Advent we address a Collect to the Son (in the old Use there were three Advent Collects so addressed), because

do not allow it in any form to be an apostolical institution, but only a useful order and appointment of the Church. So Cassian says expressly, that as long as the perfection of the primitive Church remained inviolable, there was no observation of Lent ; but when men began to decline from the apostolical fervour of devotion, and give themselves overmuch to worldly affairs, then the priests in general agreed to recall them from secular cares by a canonical indiction of fasting, and setting aside a tenth of their time to God. For so he reckons that the thirty-six days, which was then the fixed term of Lent, were by computation the tenth of the whole year," etc. etc. [Sec. 6].

it is He, whose Second Advent we are anticipating in faith and hope, and soliciting in prayer. It is the voice of the bride saying to the coming One, "Come, Lord Jesus."¹ The Collect for St. Stephen's Day is appropriately addressed to our Lord, because St. Stephen called on Christ when dying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit;"² and we naturally place ourselves on his day in his point of view. This Collect for the First Sunday in Lent forms also an exception to the general rule. Perhaps it is so addressed in order that we may distinctly recognise this same tempted, hungering Jesus, while exhibiting all the infirmities of our flesh, as being nevertheless the eternal Son of God, a glorious truth revealed from heaven at the Baptism of Christ,³ but of which the Devil thought to instil a doubt, when he said, "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread."⁴ We recognise, moreover, by speaking of His godly motions in our hearts, that He not only in His human nature received the Holy Ghost at His Baptism, and was led up by Him into the wilderness,⁵ but also that He is the dispenser to us of the same Spirit, which then descended in bodily shape upon Him.⁶

"O Lord, who for our sake didst fast forty days and forty nights." The characteristic feature of this clause is the "for our sake." Our Lord fasted for our sake in two senses. First, as "bearing our sins in His own body," not "on the tree"⁷ only, but in the wilderness. Fasting is the outward expression of mourning, humiliation, penitence. In our Lord was no sin,⁸ for which He

¹ See Rev. xxii. 17, 20.² Acts vii. 59.³ See St. Matt. iii. 17.⁴ St. Matt. iv. 3.⁵ St. Matt. iv. 1.⁶ See St. Luke iii. 22.⁷ See 1 Peter ii. 24.⁸ See 1 John iii. 5.

needed to humble Himself and repent. But as "the second man,"¹ who identified Himself with us in every respect, He entangled Himself voluntarily in all the consequences of our fall. A modern view has been broached of the atoning work of Christ, which represents it as the offering to God of a perfect vicarious repentance. What was demanded, this view affirms, was that man should perfectly repent of the evil which in God's sight he had done.² This, it is alleged, fallen man cannot do ; it is beyond him. No one appreciates the evil of sin with sufficient vividness and loathes it enough, to offer to God an *adequate* repentance. But Christ, being a perfectly sinless Man, and having most closely identified Himself with the whole human race by His Incarnation, was qualified to exhibit, and did exhibit, such a repentance on behalf of us all. While we stoutly deny that there was nothing more than this in Christ's blessed Atonement, we may admit that there is a truth in this idea of vicarious repentance. Christ *did* make Himself completely one with us, as in all other respects, so in humiliation and mourning for sins. He had not done the sins ; was in no way implicated in their guilt ; yet mourned for them, shed bitter tears for them, fasted and denied Himself for them, as though He had. This, then, is one (and the highest) sense in which Christ "fasted for our sake."—But He fasted also in an exemplary, as well as an expiatory, sense. He came to be not only "a sacrifice for sin," but "also an ensample of godly life."³ Godly life cannot be without the morti-

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 47.

² This seems to be the view, so far as it can be expressed in few words, taken by Dr. John M'Leod Campbell in his work on "The Nature of the Atonement" [Cambridge, 1856]. See particularly Chap. vi., "On the retrospective aspect of the Atonement," pp. 134, 135, 136, etc.

³ Collect for Second Sunday after Easter.

fication of the lower nature or flesh, of which lower nature the body is both an organ, and also a sacrament or symbol. And Christ would teach us this by His forty days' fast (a fast of extraordinary severity, and which could be sustained only by miracle, and therefore cannot be literally imitated) that without keeping under the body and bringing it into subjection ¹ (the words are far stronger in the original; they signify, bruising the body ² as a pugilist bruises his antagonist, and reducing it to slavery,³ as a slave kidnapper reduces a free man whom he has stolen) there can be no winning of the heavenly prize.⁴ If without this self-discipline even the Apostle St. Paul felt that he could not succeed, how shall feebler Christians hope that they may dispense with it? No! let them take up the cross daily, and follow their Master,⁵ as St. Peter exhorts, "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind."⁶

"Give us grace to use such abstinence, that, our flesh being subdued to the Spirit." The capital initial of the word "Spirit," as it appears in our present Prayer Books, shows, of course, that God's Spirit is meant. "Spirit," however, has not always had a capital initial. It appeared with a capital in Edward's First Book; lost it three years afterwards in his Second Book; and remained without a capital down to 1661.⁷ If a small initial is used, the word "spirit" might mean the higher element of our nature (which consists, as St. Paul teaches in 1 Thess. v.,

¹ 1 Cor. ix. 27.

² ὑπωπιάζω.

³ δουλαγωγῶ.

⁴ See 1 Cor. ix. 24.

⁵ See St. Luke ix. 23.

⁶ 1 Peter iv. 1.

⁷ In the Black-letter Prayer Book of 1636, containing the MS. alterations and additions made in 1661, the word "spirit" has a small initial, nor is there any manuscript correction. Yet in the "Sealed Books," "Spirit" appears with a capital. On whose authority?

of "spirit, soul, and body");¹ and in that case the petition would be that by abstinence the lower part of our nature might be brought into subjection to the higher. But since the higher part of our nature cannot possibly gain the mastery of the lower, without being quickened and strengthened by the Holy Spirit of God, whose influence alone can give a right direction to our spirit, it is much better to suppose that the Holy Spirit is here meant, or rather the Holy Spirit, as animating and actuating ours. And thus that passage of the Romans comes chiming in beautifully with this part of the petition; "If ye live after the flesh" (live as its natural propensions induce you to do), "ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit" (through His prompting and influence) "do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."² Glorious prize, indeed, which God proposes for a little act of self-denial!—The phraseology of the Collect, however, points at something more than a single act or even a succession of single acts. "That, our flesh being subdued to the Spirit" indicates *a state of subjection*, a habit which is formed gradually, and, like other habits, can only be formed by repeated acts.—Remark, too, that what the Collect speaks of, as being brought into subjection, is "the flesh," which means, as I have observed, not so much the material body as that corrupt nature, the chief organ of which is the body. It is not merely sensuality which has to be mortified under the Spirit's influence, but temper, vanity, jealousy, and an hundred things besides.

"We may ever obey thy godly motions in righteousness and true holiness." We read in St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans of "the motions of sins" (passions instigating to sin), "which were by the law," working "in our

¹ 1 Thess v. 23.

² Rom. viii. 13.

members, to bring forth fruit unto death.”¹ Here we are told of “motions” in an opposite direction, the instigations made by our Lord Jesus Christ in the hearts of His people, their compliance with which redounds to His honour and glory, and their salvation. The Holy Spirit is, as it were, a silver thread, let down from Christ in heaven into the soul of each one of His disciples; and when that silver thread is touched by His scarred hand, the vibration caused in the soul thereby is a “godly motion” of Christ.—“Righteousness and true holiness” is a phrase borrowed from St. Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians, where these graces are said to be the characteristic features of “the new man,” which the Apostle exhorts us to “put on.” To obey the motions of Christ in the soul is the way to “put on the new man, which, after God is created in righteousness and true holiness,”² just as the mortification by the Spirit of the deeds of the body is the way to “put off the old man,”³ or old nature, which is in a state of moral corruption according to the lusts of deceit.⁴ “*True* holiness” here means something more than real, genuine holiness. The lusts are called “lusts of deceit,” because they have a tendency to blind our eyes, to cheat and cozen us, and make us think about sin with levity. Holiness, on the other hand, is called “holiness of truth,”⁵ or true holiness, because it shows sin and other spiritual subjects as they really are, and as we shall view them when the dawn of eternity quenches all artificial lights, and shows all objects of worldly ambition to be tinsel baubles.

“To thy honour and glory.” But how does mortification by the Spirit of the deeds of the body, and

¹ Rom. vii. 5.² Eph. iv. 24.³ Eph. iv. 22.⁴ τὰς ἐπιθυμίας τῆς ἀπάτης.⁵ Eph. iv. 24. ὁσιότης τῆς ἀληθείας.

obedience to Christ's motions in the heart, redound specially to His honour and glory? The Collect-writer here holds fast to Scripture. St. Paul speaks of his earnest expectation and hope that "Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death."¹ And it is open to *all* to magnify Him in their bodies, if not by literal death, yet by mortifying through the Spirit the deeds of the body. For it is said, "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?"² And again; "We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."³ If, then, our bodies are His members, it is easy to see how He is honoured and glorified by our so keeping them under, and bringing them into subjection, that they may be yielded as instruments of righteousness unto Him. *His* body was a temple for the personal indwelling of the Son of God, as He declared when He said to the Jews, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."⁴ Our bodies are the temples in which He dwells by the Spirit; as it is said, "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?"⁵ and immediately afterwards, "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?"⁶ Therefore any vindication of the purity of this temple necessarily redounds to the honour of Him who dwelleth therein.

Our final observation shall be upon the wise and holy moderation of this prayer. It intimates clearly enough that abstinence is to be practised by Christians (for why else should we pray for grace to practise it?), while it leaves the kind and measure of abstinence to be determined and limited by the end in view. Whether the abstinence is to be from food, or amusements, or luxuries

¹ Philip. i. 20.² 1 Cor. vi. 15.³ Eph. v. 30.⁴ St. John ii. 19.⁵ 1 Cor. vi. 15.⁶ 1 Cor. vi. 19.

and comforts ; whether from all food, or only from the more palatable forms of it ; whether it is to be total or partial ; these are questions which each man must answer for himself under the guidance of God's Spirit, and which will be answered differently according to the infinitely varying circumstances and temperament of the persons, who are to submit themselves to the discipline. The great point, and the only essential point, is that, by whatever form and measure of discipline, the end should be secured. And the end is, that the rebellious flesh should be so controlled and brought into subjection, that the inspirations of the Saviour by the Spirit should be heeded and complied with, and the members of our bodies yielded readily and willingly as instruments of righteousness unto God.¹

¹ See Rom. vi. 13.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT.

Almighty God, who seest that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves; Keep us both outwardly in our bodies, and inwardly in our souls; that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Deus, qui conspicias omni nos virtute destitui; interius exteriusque custodi, ut ab omnibus adversitatibus muniamur in corpore, et a pravis cogitationibus mundemur in mente. Per Dominum.—*Greg. Sac.*¹—*Miss. Sar.*

LENT is the season when we commemorate our Lord's conflict with and victory over the devil,—that conflict and victory which opened in the wilderness after the forty days' fast, when the devil thrice assaulted Christ,² and was thrice pierced with the sword of the Spirit.³ Now Christ's conflict with and victory over the powers of evil was not for Himself alone. It was a victory won, not only in man and by man, inasmuch as He took to Himself a perfect human nature, but *for* man, and even for that portion of the human race who, as being farthest from God, were most entirely under Satan's dominion. And thus we advance, by a sequence of thought at once

¹ In Gregory's Sacramentary, as given by Muratori [ii. *Col.* 35], there is an *et* before "ab omnibus;" and the end is given simply as "Per."

² See St. Matt. iv. 3, 5, 6, 8, 9.

³ See St. Matt. iv. 4, 7, 10; and Eph. vi. 17.

beautiful and edifying, from the Gospel of the First Sunday in Lent to that for the Second, in which is recorded the touching incident of the restoration of the Syrophœnician's daughter, who was grievously vexed with a devil.¹ Observe the striking contrast between the two narratives. In the first a personal attack is made upon the Saviour, leading Him to personal conflict, and through personal conflict to victory. Here there is no attack upon Him personally; but the enemy has fastened upon a poor girl as his prey, who, in virtue of our Lord's human nature, was allied to Him and represented by Him. There is no conflict on the part of Christ, but simply the exercise of power on behalf of others. And the power is not exercised, as in the former case, by a word addressed to the tempter, but simply by an act of the Saviour's will. It is the power won by His own victory, which He now puts forth in the cause of suffering humanity, thus illustrating those consolatory words of the Epistle to the Hebrews; "In that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour" (the very word in the original, which the Canaanite here uses, when she prays, "Lord, help me") "them that are tempted."² The evident allusion made to this Gospel in the Collect is our reason for referring to it at such length.

"Almighty God, who seest that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves;"—an enlargement on the original in Gregory's Sacramentary, which ran thus, "who seest that we are destitute of all power." The addition of the words "to help ourselves" makes the reference to the Gospel a little more explicit. No human creatures were ever so helpless as the demoniacs. Such an one

¹ St. Matt. xv. 21-29.

² Heb. ii. 18. The word is βοηθεῖν.

had lapsed entirely into the power of the evil one, was tyrannized over at his pleasure, crushed and spurned beneath his hoof. Just as Satan in the beginning had made the serpent his mouthpiece, so, in this direst of all forms of human calamity, he did with the human creature. The possessed person became the devil's mouthpiece, and spoke the devil's words, as we see in the interview between our Lord and the man that had the legion, where the many devils who had entered into the sufferer speak in the plural,¹ and where the personality and consciousness of the man seem to be fused into that of the spirits who have taken possession of him.² But, helpless as the case was, humanly speaking, the Canaanite mother knew that it was not beyond the reach of God's power and sympathy. And she believed that this Prophet, of whose works of wonder and love she had heard so much, represented God, and was His ambassador upon earth. So she came to Him with lowliest gesture, falling at His feet,³ as if to throw herself upon His mercy, and briefly (but oh, how efficaciously!) praying, "Lord, help me!"⁴ The word, according to its etymology, denotes the running with succour at the cry of any person in distress, as of one stricken down by robbers, or who has fallen into a pit. And it is the word, as we have already said, used by the writer to the Hebrews of the succour which Christ gives, and is qualified to give, to "them that are tempted."⁵

If we are not possessed by the devil, we are, at least, apt to be sorely tempted by him. Here, then, is a prayer for us,—the prayer which, in the Canaanite's mouth, won such glorious deliverance, and which, in ours, if accompanied with equal faith, will be equally effective, what-

¹ St. Mark v. 12. ² See St. Mark v. 9. ³ See St. Mark vii. 25.

⁴ St. Matt. xv. 25.

⁵ See Heb. ii. 18.

ever our trial or temptation may be ; " Lord, help me ; run to me with thy Divine succour ; for I am stricken down in the spiritual combat, and mine enemies stand over me triumphing, as I lie prostrate."

" Keep us both outwardly in our bodies, and inwardly in our souls." The order of the adverbs in the original, " Keep us both inwardly and outwardly," is better than in the translation, because the keeping of the soul is not only the more important point, but secures, more or less, the guardianship of the body, according to that gracious promise to him who makes the Lord his refuge, and abides under the shadow of the Almighty ; " There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways."¹ In demoniacal possession both physical and mental evil were combined ; the man was laid prostrate, body and soul, under the power of the Evil One. If such possession does not exist nowadays, or, at least, is never fully developed (a fact which is perhaps too readily assumed), at all events there are amongst us shadows of it, which, more or less, indicate what it was. In the very word " dipsomaniac," now used to designate one who has entirely lost his self-control under the temptation to drink, we have a testimony to a twofold power of evil,—over the body and over the mind of the sufferer. For " dipsomaniac " signifies one who is afflicted with the mania arising from thirst. *Mania* is another word for madness, and implies that the mind of the patient is more or less deranged ; that his power of will and moral resistance has been shattered by indulgence, and can no more make head against the access of the disorder. Thirst is, of course, a bodily appetite which, intensified by long

¹ Psalm xci. 10, 11.

habits of intemperance, at length acts upon the mind. The Gospels, with their frequent notices of the casting out of evil spirits by our Lord, would certainly lead us to think that by the exertion of His divine power, blessing the use of appropriate natural means, even this most dire calamity is remediable. Possibly we do not place faith enough in the continued residence among us (though in an unmiraculous form) of the first of those powers which, before His ascension, our Lord bequeathed to His Church; 'In my name shall they cast out devils.'¹

"That we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul." The original Latin is rather richer in idea, inasmuch as different verbs are used in suing for bodily and spiritual blessings. Cleansing, not defence, is what is sued for in regard of the mind;—"that we may be defended from all adversities in body, and cleansed from evil thoughts in mind"—according to the phraseology of that other noble Collect with which the Communion Service opens; "Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit." To pray "Defend us from evil thoughts" does not necessarily imply that we are under their power at present. But the petition to be cleansed from them does, of course, assume that the thoughts of our hearts are naturally bad, according to that inspired statement made so very early in the history of man; "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."² "From within," said our Lord, echoing, as was His wont, the earlier Scriptures, "from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

¹ St. Mark xvi. 17.² Gen. vi. 5.

thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness : all these evil things come from within, and defile the man.”¹ The mind can only be cleansed from this defilement by the inspiration of God’s Holy Spirit. And the way in which this Spirit acts, in the cleansing of the thoughts, is by engendering faith in Christ, as it is written, “purifying their hearts by faith.”² He applies to the soul “the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God,” and thus purges “the conscience from dead works to serve the living God.”³

Defence from evil thoughts, not already engendered in the heart, but liable to assault us at any moment, and to hurt us unless resistance is offered to them,—this also, no less than cleansing from them, is a blessing to be sought in earnest prayer. Observe that evil thoughts may assault without hurting. They cannot hurt, if no encouragement is given to them ; if, on the first moment of our becoming conscious of them, we oust them by a vigorous effort of the will. “Let the wicked forsake his way,” it is said, “and the unrighteous man his thoughts.”⁴ And the way to forsake them is to do with them as St. Paul did with the “viper” which “came out of the heat, and fastened on his hand”⁵—to shake them off into their native element, the fire of hell, and to occupy the mind actively with some other subject. The devout recital of holy texts and psalms will be a great help in doing this ; for which purpose it is necessary to have much of the practical and devotional part of Holy Scripture by heart, that, when evil thoughts make their assault, the sword of the Spirit may be without delay unsheathed for

¹ St. Mark vii. 21, 22, 23.

² Acts xv. 9.

³ See Heb. ix. 14.

⁴ Isaiah lv. 7.

⁵ Acts xxviii. 3, 5.

service. "Thy word have I hid in mine heart" (treasured it up in my memory), "that I might not sin against thee."¹

This Collect draws its point, as we have seen, from the case of demoniacal possession to which the Gospel refers. How then, it might be asked, since demoniacal possession is supposed to have ceased nowadays, can it have any just and appropriate reference to the circumstances of modern Christians? The answer is that, although possession may no longer exist, yet what unquestionably does exist bears a close relation and analogy to it. Satan still operates in a natural way upon the faculties of the human soul, upon the memory, the understanding, the imagination, and the will; and these operations bear to demoniacal possession very much the same relation which the ordinary operations of the Holy Ghost bear to His miraculous gifts. Neither the Spirit of God nor His great antagonist have ceased to act, because supernatural phenomena are now exhibited by neither of them; and it is by contemplating these phenomena, as they once were exhibited, that we gain a notion, on the one hand, of the malignity of the evil one, and of the power and gloriousness of the agency of God's Spirit on the other.

¹ Psalm cxix. 11.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT.

We beseech thee, Almighty God, look upon the hearty desires of thy humble servants, and stretch forth the right hand of thy Majesty, to be our defence against all our enemies; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Quaesumus, omnipotens Deus, vota humilium respice, atque ad defensionem nostram dexteram tuae majestatis extende. Per Dominum.—Greg. Sac.—Miss Sar.

OUR Reformers have here also done what the terseness of the Latin language made it often so necessary to do in translating the ancient Collects—expanded the idea by the introduction of two or three words. The old Collect ended with the word “defence.” They have added “against all our enemies.” And hereby, as in the preceding Collect, they have made the reference to the Gospel of the day a little more explicit. Last Sunday’s Gospel,¹ it will be remembered, recorded the casting out, by an act of our Lord’s will, of the devil, or unclean spirit,² who was grievously vexing the Canaanite woman’s daughter. Nor, in the present Collect, have we lost sight altogether of that touching narrative. It is still upon our minds, haunting our memories. For here we pray God to “look upon the hearty desires of” His “humble servants.” Hearty indeed were the desires of the Canaanite mother. She not only asked, but sought;

¹ St. Matt. xv. 21-29.

² St. Mark vii. 25.

not only sought, but knocked.¹ The cry for mercy, and the mention of the calamity under which her daughter was labouring,²—this was the asking. The cry for succour, after our Lord had discouraged further application by saying that His commission reached only to sinners of Israel,³ and not to sinners of the Gentiles—this was the seeking. The turning His own words against Him with holy ingenuity, when He had told her that the children's bread must not be thrown to dogs, and the pleading for a crumb on the ground that she *was* a dog⁴—this was the knocking. Moreover, as her perseverance in supplication, under circumstances of the deepest discouragement, showed the heartiness of her desires, so both her attitude (for St. Mark tells us that she "fell at his feet"⁵), and her taking to herself so meekly His silence and His rebuffs, and accepting at His mouth the designation of a Gentile dog, shows how truly "humble" she was in heart and character. And if any one who uses this prayer will only unite with desires as hearty, humility as genuine and profound as hers, to them, as to her, the door of mercy and relief shall be opened; for fervour, perseverance, and humility make such loud pulsations at that door, that He who stands behind it cannot but unbar it when He hears them. But in the Gospel for the present Sunday⁶ a still more terrific picture is exhibited to us of the power of the Evil One. Our Lord there teaches that even where Satan has been once cast out, if the house of the heart be not secured by the tenancy of a heavenly visitant, he will return again to his old domicile, taking "with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself,"

¹ See St. Matt. vii. 7, 8.

² St. Matt. xv. 22.

³ St. Matt. xv. 24, 25; and see Rom. xv. 8

⁴ St. Matt. xv. 27.

⁵ St. Mark vii. 25.

⁶ St. Luke xi. 14-29.

all of whom "enter in and dwell there."¹ Thus the demon of idolatry had been driven out of the Jews by the misery and humiliation of the Babylonish captivity; by that judgment they were thoroughly broken of that sin, so that they never again fell into it. But, as the God of their fathers still found no place in their hearts, Satan returned thither in many other shapes, as a spirit of formalism, hypocrisy, bigotry, hatred of the truth, blindness, obduracy, and blasphemy against the Holy Ghost,² an evidence of which second and more awful possession they gave by ascribing our Lord's miracles, beneficent as they were, and obviously wrought by the finger of God, to Satanic agency.³ The Collect, therefore, casting a glance forward on its own Gospel, as it had cast a glance backward on that of the previous Sunday, prays, not for defence simply, but for "defence against all our enemies," these enemies being, in the first instance, the principalities and powers against which we wrestle,⁴ and, subordinately to them, their two great allies, the world and the flesh.⁵

"We beseech thee, Almighty God, look upon the hearty desires." There is a close resemblance between this Collect and that for the Third Sunday after the Epiphany. There, however, we pray God "mercifully" to "look upon our infirmities." Under a deep sense of these infirmities, we spread them out before Him, and seek to attract towards them the regards of His fatherly compassion; and thus "out of weakness" we are "made strong,"⁶ according to that word of St. Paul's, "When I am

¹ St. Luke xi. 24, 25, 26.

² See St. Matt. xii. 31, 32.

³ See St. Matt. xii. 24; and St. Luke xi. 15.

⁴ See Eph. vi. 12.

⁵ See 1 John ii. 16.

⁶ See Heb. xi. 34.

weak, then am I strong.”¹ Here we pray Him to “look upon *our hearty desires*” (“vows” it is in the original²), that is, upon the earnestness and fervour of our prayers. Alas! how often have our prayers been mere lip-service instead of the expression of hearty desire, in which case it is not to be wondered at that God has not looked back on them (such is the force of the original word, which denotes a gesture like that made by our Lord when He turned back towards the weeping daughters of Jerusalem, and took notice of their tears³); for no cry reaches His ear save the cry of the heart.

“Of thy humble servants.” We may ascertain whether we pray humbly, by inquiring how much we manifest of the Canaanite mother’s spirit. Do we take rebuffs at God’s hand meekly and lovingly, and persevere still in prayer in spite of them all—rebuffs coming from His silence, or from some rough and apparently disheartening word spoken in our conscience (as though the blessings and comforts and privileges of the Gospel were not for sinners so vile as we), or from providential trials, such as sickness, bereavement, and poverty? But again: it is well to make our prayers flow in the channel marked out for them by God’s promises, to rest

¹ 2 Cor. xii. 10.

² “*Vota humilium respice.*” The word “vota” occurs again in the Collect for the First Sunday after the Epiphany, where it is rendered simply “prayers,” and in the Easter Collect, where it is better rendered “good desires.” “Prayers” are only the body, of which “good” or “hearty desires” are the soul. The Latin word “votum” signifies (1) a promise made to God, on condition of His granting some favour, as, for example, the vows of Jacob and Jephthah; (2) the thing promised, as where the Psalmist says (Psalm lxvi. 13), “I will pay thee my vows;” (3) a prayer urged with special earnestness, a wish, desire, longing. See our observations on the force of the word in the Collect for the First Sunday after the Epiphany.

³ See St. Luke xxiii. 27, 28.

our hopes of an answer upon some express word of His. And here we have such an express word in the tenth Psalm, which runs thus; "Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the humble: thou wilt prepare their heart" (the marginal rendering is nearer to the original, "thou wilt establish their heart," by giving them comfort and sure confidence in Thee), "thou wilt cause thine ear to hear."¹ Thus we have God's own assurance of His listening to the hearty desires of the humble. How confident may we be then that, in His own due time, He will turn and notice us!

"And stretch forth the right hand of thy Majesty to be our defence." Again a petition is put into our mouth, suggested, inspired by God Himself. For it is only an echo of what we find in Psalm cxxxviii.; "Thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me;"² and again; "O God, how long shall the adversary reproach? shall the enemy blaspheme thy name for ever? Why withdrawest thou thy hand, even thy right hand? pluck it out of thy bosom."³—But let us not fail to appreciate the full force of the expression, "the right hand of thy Majesty." The Christian knows that at the right hand of God's Majesty there is both power and sympathy. Sympathy—because our Lord, who took upon Him all the infirmities of our flesh,⁴ and "was in all points tempted like as we are,"⁵ is now seated "on the right hand of the Majesty on high."⁶ Power—because this ascended and exalted Saviour, in

¹ Psalm x. 17. Dr. Hengstenberg's rendering is; "*Thou makest their heart firm*—through the inward conviction which thou givest them of the hearing of their prayer." Dean Perowne renders; "*Thou establishest their heart.*"

² Psalm cxxxviii. 7.

³ Psalm lxxiv. 10, 11.

⁴ See St. Matt. viii. 17.

⁵ Heb. iv. 15.

⁶ Heb. i. 3.

the days of His flesh, defeated the devil for us,¹ slew Satan (as David slew Goliath) with His own sword, "through death" destroying "him that had the power of death, that is, the devil,"² and, "having spoiled principalities and powers, made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in" "his cross."³ St. Stephen, under the cruel assault of his persecutors, saw this Conqueror of the strong man armed⁴ "standing on the right hand of God"⁵ to succour His martyr. And from that glorified Form, on the right hand of the Majesty on high, must flow forth even now the sympathy and succour we need under the assaults of our spiritual foes.

"Against all our enemies." This expression establishes, as we have already remarked, an interesting connexion between the Collect and the Gospel, the latter giving an account of the re-entry of Satan, with "seven other spirits more wicked than himself," into a heart from which he had been temporarily ejected. Satan, as being only a creature of God, cannot himself be omnipresent; yet the legions of evil spirits, which move in obedience to his command, and are everywhere doing his work, make him virtually so. This plurality of evil spirits is recognised in St. Paul's designation of our spiritual antagonists as "principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this world, spiritual wickedness in high places,"⁶ while the universality of Satan's presence, in virtue of their number, is indicated by the name given him in the Epistle to the Ephesians, "prince of the power of the air."⁷ The air is everywhere; so that a bird cannot fly to the pin-

¹ See St. Matt. iv. 1-12; St. Luke iv. 1-14.

² See 1 Sam. xvii. 51; and Heb. ii. 14.

³ Col. ii. 14, 15.

⁴ See St. Luke xi. 21, 22.

⁵ See Acts vii. 55, 56.

⁶ Eph. vi. 12.

⁷ Eph. ii. 2.

nacle of the temple, nor hide itself in the hollow of a decayed oak, without encountering it; and Satan's power is, by means of his satellites, universally diffused through the moral atmosphere. Nor must it be forgotten, in speaking of "all our enemies," that, over and above evil angels, there are arrayed against us the world and the flesh—in other words, evil men and evil self; and that these three constitute an unholy Trinity, three separate yet allied powers, actuated by a common design of drawing us away from our Father, Redeemer, and Sanctifier;—the survey of which may well make us watchful, humble, and constant in prayer, while it never need discourage or make us distrustful, "because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world."¹ "Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy. . . . Thou stretchedst out thy right hand, the earth swallowed them."²

¹ 1 John iv. 4.

² Exod. xv. 6, 12.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT.

Grant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that we, who for our evil deeds do worthily deserve to be punished, by the comfort of thy grace may mercifully be relieved; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Concede, quaesumus, omnipotens Deus, ut qui ex merito nostrae actionis affligimur, tuae gratiae consolatione respicemur. Per Dominum.—*Greg. Sac.—Miss. Sar.*

As in the wilderness, after making trial of the bitter waters of Marah,¹ the children of Israel came to an oasis called Elim, "where were twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm trees: and they encamped there by the waters;"² so in the heart of Lent, the dreary ungenial season of the Christian year, when sin, its guilt, and its consequences, are the subjects uppermost in our thoughts, the true Israel of God finds a Sunday called from a very early period "*Dominica Refectionis*," Refreshment Sunday, where they encamp, as it were, in a green pasture, beside the waters of comfort. The Gospel, Epistle, and Collect of this Sunday are a threefold cord,—a cord with three silver strands, most artfully and beautifully twisted together. The Epistle spiritualises the Gospel; the Collect takes it up as spiritualised, and turns it into a prayer. The Gospel³ gives the account of the feeding in the wilderness of the five thousand who

¹ Exod. xv. 23, 24.

² Exod. xv. 27.

³ St. John vi. 1-15.

had followed Christ thither, "because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased."¹ It was, no doubt, the recital of this tale of wonder in the Gospel which led to the Sunday's being called "Refreshment Sunday." But the bodily refreshment ministered by our Lord on this occasion was symbolical of our higher spiritual refreshment by His grace, and the sacraments of His grace. Indeed, the miracle may be regarded as an outward bodily fulfilment of the promise made in that blessed invitation; "Come unto me all that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you."² The people who followed Christ into the wilderness travailed and were heavy laden. Many of them were sick and suffering, labouring under the burdens of humanity, and brought to Him to be healed; for in St. Matthew's account of the miracle we read: "Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick."³ All were travel-stained, foot-sore, faint, and hungry; they were in a desert spot, where no supplies could be obtained, and had, as far as appears, brought no provisions with them.⁴ Our Lord would show, by what He did for them, that even this lower kind of coming to Him shall not lose its reward; He will give refreshment to those who toil after Him on foot into the wilderness, intent only upon obtaining a bodily cure for themselves or their friends. But the Epistle⁵ leads us on to another sort of burden and weariness, besides that

¹ St. John vi. 2.

² This is the translation of St. Matt. xi. 28, which is given in our Communion Office. In the English Bible the translation runs; "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The former is rather more close to the original than the latter, the word translated *give rest* being in the Greek only one word—"ἀναπαύσω."

³ St. Matt. xiv. 14.

⁴ See St. Matt. xiv. 15.

⁵ Gal. iv. 21, end.

arising from sickness, or from a journey through a desert place. For it speaks of two covenants, the covenant of the Law and the covenant of Grace ;¹ of the literal earthly Jerusalem, which is in bondage with her children,² being still under the first of these covenants, and of the Jerusalem which is above,³ and which "is free" from the Law in its condemning power, altogether exempt from its jurisdiction as a covenant of works. The Law's terms of life are ; "The man that doeth them shall live in them."⁴ The Gospel's terms of life are ; "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" (the Curse-bearer, the Law-fulfiller), "and thou shalt be saved."⁵ "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life" (it is not a thing gained, but a thing given), "and this life is in his Son."⁶ To have the yoke of unforgiven sin hanging round one's neck, and to work, work, work, by way of earning forgiveness, and so drawing our neck out of the yoke—this is a bondage, a drudgery, a weariness indeed. And it is from this bondage and drudgery *principally* that our Lord promises deliverance when He says ; "Come unto me, all that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you (will give you rest)."⁷ I will give you rest and refreshment merely for the coming ; and, so refreshed, ye shall go on thenceforward to take My yoke on you and learn of Me.⁸—The Epistle having thus taught us how to spiritualise the Gospel, the Collect takes up the Gospel in the sense put upon it by the Epistle, and turns it into a prayer. "Grant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that we, who for our evil deeds do worthily deserve to be punished ;"—(this is the voice of a conscience

¹ Gal. iv. 24.

² Gal. iv. 25.

³ Gal. iv. 26.

⁴ Gal. iii. 12.

⁵ Acts xvi. 31.

⁶ 1 John v. 11.

⁷ St. Matt. xi. 28.

⁸ St. Matt. xi. 29.

terrified by apprehensions of judgment to come, and which the Law is seeking once again to entangle in its yoke of bondage)—“by the comfort of thy grace may mercifully be relieved (or refreshed)” (here is Christ’s whisper of peace to the weary and heavy-laden soul which really comes to Him),—“the rest wherewith” He causes “the weary to rest, and the refreshing” by the consolation of His grace.¹

“Grant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that we, who for our evil deeds do worthily deserve to be punished.” A finishing touch was given to this clause by Cosin at the Revision of 1661, which we cannot but regard as a happy one. By the slightest possible alteration of the wording, variety of idea was introduced into the Collect. On Septuagesima Sunday we prayed that “we, who *are* justly punished for our offences, may be mercifully delivered by thy goodness.” And so the first clause of this Collect also stood in the Missal of Sarum, and so Cranmer and his colleagues translated it; “Grant that we, who for our evil deeds *ARE* worthily punished;”—that is, the original represents the petitioner as undergoing punishment already. Cosin, having allowed the same phrase to stand in the Septuagesima Collect, in that before us dexterously altered the “*are* worthily” to “do worthily *deserve* to be,” thus calling the mind off from present chastisement, and throwing it forward into a judgment which is apprehended in future—the judgment of the last great day. God may, and often does, punish sin in this life. But the grand period of punishment, when the justice of His sentences will be made manifest to all, will be the final day of account, when the great white throne shall be set up, and

¹ See Isaiah xxviii. 12.

the books shall be opened, and the book of life unrolled, and the dead judged out of the things that are written in the books, according to their works.¹ It was the prospect of this day, opened to him by St. Paul's preaching, that made conscience-stricken Felix tremble.² And the apprehensions arising from the prospect of that final retribution form the chief part of the burden which the Law of God lays upon the conscience; and under the feeling of this burden we approach the throne of grace in the Collect before us. By an act of the imagination we place ourselves beforehand at the bar; and finding that we cannot, when so arraigned, answer God to one charge in a thousand, we fall low on our knees before Him, and confess that for our evil deeds we "do worthily deserve to be punished." Our prayer is that even now, while we labour under these gloomy and disquieting apprehensions, we "may, by the comfort of His grace, mercifully be relieved." On Septuagesima Sunday the prayer was that we might be mercifully delivered by God's "goodness, for the glory of" His "name;"—this was our plea with Him to obtain deliverance, the glory of His character, Who is goodness and love. Now, in the present Collect, the *method of our deliverance* is specified; the relief or refreshment is to be "by the comfort of His grace."

Grace! what tongue shall tell the treasures of that word? what description shall unfold the richness of it? Its fundamental meaning must be *pardon*, freely given as regards ourselves, though it cost our Surety and Representative so great a price of suffering and hardship to obtain it for us. Then, secondly, it must mean the *peace* which flows from the consciousness of this pardon, from the assurance, given by God's Spirit in the soul, that it is

¹ See Rev. xx. 11, 12.

² See Acts xxiv. 25.

our own, and that we have truly embraced it. And is this all? No; not all, by any means; not all we need, nor all we are in Christ entitled to. The English word "comfort," considered in its derivation, does not simply mean that quieting and soothing of the soul, which may be effected by a mere powerless expression of sympathy. It comes from the late Latin *conforto*, to *strengthen* physically, or morally, or both. "When" Paul "had received meat," *confortatus est*, "he was *strengthened*."¹ "There appeared unto" Christ "an angel from heaven," *confortans eum*, "strengthening him."² God the Holy Ghost is called another Comforter ("I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter"³), and most assuredly His blessed office is not only to shed peace abroad in the heart, by assuring us of God's forgiveness, but to give us the moral strength which is born of that assurance. When He first descended on the Church at Pentecost, the Apostles "out of weakness were made strong,"⁴ and those who a few weeks before had forsaken their Master in cowardly flight,⁵ or even denied Him,⁶ were now bold as a lion in

¹ See Acts ix. 19.

IV ² See St. Luke xxii. 43. The other instances in which the word *conforto* appears in the Vulgate, or Latin translation, of the New Testament, are, Rom. ~~vi.~~ 20, Abraham "was strong" (*confortatus*) "in faith;" 1 Cor. xvi. 13, "Be strong" (*confortamini*); Eph. vi. 10, "Be strong" (*confortamini*) "in the Lord;" Phil. iv. 13, "Through Christ which strengtheneth me (*qui me confortat*); Col. i. 11, "Strengthened with all might;" (*in omni virtute confortati*); 1 Tim. i. 12, "Christ Jesus, . . . who hath enabled me" (*qui me confortavit*); 2 Tim. ii. 1, "Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus" (*confortare in gratia*); 2 Tim. iv. 17, "The Lord stood with me, and strengthened me" (*Dominus mihi astitit et confortavit me*). In the Vulgate of the Old Testament the word is of frequent occurrence.

³ St. John xiv. 16.

⁴ See Heb. xi. 34.

⁵ See St. Matt. xxvi. 56; St. Mark xiv. 50.

⁶ See St. Matt. xxvi. 69-75; St. Mark xiv. 66-72; St. Luke xxii. 54-62; St. John xviii. 17, 25, 26, 27.

confessing Him before magistrates and councils.¹ The grace of God (which is the action of His Spirit upon the heart) comforts, not the feelings and affections only, but the will; and to comfort the will is to strengthen it and make it vigorous. And remember that any comfort which does not invigorate the will, is only too likely to be an illusion. The will is the man; and he who has not surrendered his will to God has not surrendered himself.

¹ See Acts iv. 7-14; and v. 29, 40, 41, 42.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT.

We beseech thee, Almighty God,
mercifully to look upon thy people ;
that by thy great goodness they
may be governed [and preserved
evermore, both in body and soul ;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Quaesumus, omnipotens Deus,
familiam tuam propitius respice ;
ut te largiente regatur in corpore,
et te servante custodiatur in
mente. Per Dominum. — *Sac.
Greg.—Miss. Sar.*

THE Christian Easter corresponds, as every one knows, to the Jewish Passover. The celebration of the Passover began on the fourteenth day of the month Abib,¹ when the Paschal lamb was to be slain in the evening.² Abib, being the month of the Exodus, was honoured by being made the first month of the Jewish ecclesiastical year ;³ consequently, there was a fortnight of preparation intervening between the beginning of the year and the Passover. The Christian Church, recognising Easter as the antitype of the Passover, retains some traces of this fortnight. The Fifth Sunday in Lent is just a fortnight before Easter. It is called Passion Sunday, because the

¹ The name "Abib," which is given to this month in the Pentateuch, "means an ear of grain, a green ear ; and hence 'the month Abib' is 'the month of green ears.' It thus denoted the condition of the barley in the climate of Egypt and Palestine in this month." After the Captivity the month was called Nisan (Neh. ii. 1 ; Esther iii. 7). [See Kitto's *Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature*, s. v. ABIB.]

² See Exod. xii. 6.

³ See Exod. xii. 2, xiii. 4.

Epistle makes distinct mention of the shedding of Christ's blood,¹ and of the purpose of His death,² while the Gospel gives an account of that attempt of the Jews upon His life,³ which may be looked upon as the commencement of His Passion. On this Sunday, too, we open in the Lessons a new book of the Bible and a new train of thought. We read of the call and mission of Moses,⁴ and enter upon that series of events which culminated in the Passover and the Exodus. So that the fourteenth day before Easter may be said to be a marked period in our Church Calendar. This being the case, one would rather expect that the Collect should bear some trace of the new current of ideas, which sets in to-day, and should harmonize with the Epistle, Gospel, and Lessons. But it does not do so. And this is a weak point in it, which was observed in the proposed revision of the Prayer Book in 1689, immediately after the accession of William of Orange to the throne. Patrick, Bishop of Chichester, was to revise the Collects; and a new Collect for the Fifth Sunday in Lent was suggested, suitable enough, as being framed from the Epistle, but somewhat lengthy and cumbrous.⁵ How-

¹ See Heb. ix. 12.

² See Heb. ix. 15.

³ See St. John viii. 59.

⁴ See Exod. iii. 2, 7-11.

⁵ This Collect is given in Blunt's "Annotated Book of Common Prayer" (London, 1866. Part I., p. 95, Col. 2):—"O Almighty God, who hast sent Thy Son Jesus Christ to be an High Priest of good things to come, and by His own blood to enter in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us; mercifully look upon Thy people, that by the same blood of our Saviour, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot unto Thee, our consciences may be purged from dead works, to serve Thee, the living God, that we may receive the promise of eternal inheritance; through Jesus Christ our Lord."

A commission was issued in September 1689, to ten bishops and twenty divines (including Stillingfleet, Patrick, Tillotson, Beveridge, and Tenison), authorising them to prepare such alterations of the Liturgy and Canons as might conduce to the reconciling of differences, etc. Patrick's instructions

ever, the whole scheme of revision fell through, as it was evident from the attitude of the clergy that it would never be accepted by the lower House of Convocation. Though hardly as seasonable as it might be, the present Collect is, nevertheless, a valuable one ; and our Reformers have been skilful and felicitous in the translation of it. As it stands in Gregory's Sacramentary, and the Missal of Sarum, it runs thus ; " We beseech thee, Almighty God, mercifully to look upon *thy household* ; that by the exercise of thy bounty it may be *governed in body*, and by thy watchful care *preserved in mind*. Through the Lord."

It will be observed that for " household " or " family " the translators have substituted the word " people." And though *people* is a colder, less attractive, and less amiable word than *household* or *family*, a plausible reason may be assigned for the alteration. The petition of the Collect is for government and preservation. Now the words government and preservation rather point to what a king does for his subjects than to what the head of a family does for its members,—they are political rather than domestic words. So much may be fairly alleged in favour of the change. But the Latin word means " household " or " family,"—a word which occurs thrice elsewhere, once in the first Good Friday Collect, where God is besought " graciously to behold " His family ; and again in the Collects for the Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany, and the Twenty-second after Trinity, in both of which He is besought to keep His household with continual fatherly care (not, as

were to " make the Collects longer, by way of making them more affecting." Those who object to the terseness of our Collects manifest, by the very objection, a total inability to appreciate their excellence. (See Canon Bright's " Ancient Collects " [Oxford and London, 1869], p. 197 ; and Macaulay's " History of England " [London, 1855], vol. iii. p. 476.)

our translation runs, to keep it "in continual godliness," or "continually in his true religion"). Here the prayer is that He would "mercifully look upon" His household; and we may remind ourselves that, if we desire God to look down upon us, we must be careful to look up to Him. It is said that, when the two disciples, who heard John the Baptist speak of our Lord as the Lamb of God, followed Jesus, "Jesus turned, and saw them following."¹ We must follow Him in earnest prayer, and cry after Him, if we desire that He should turn and look back upon us in mercy. Great will be the consolation, if He looks back in such a manner that we become conscious that His eye of compassion is bent upon us,—if our eyes meet His.—Secondly, it will be observed that the original Latin Prayer spoke of God's government as applying only to the body, and of His preservation as applying only to the soul. It is very difficult fully to appreciate the distinction; and our Reformers have done wisely in obliterating it. Surely we need preservation or guardianship for the body as well as for the soul, and government or guidance for the soul as much as for the body. And so, having perhaps in view that passage of the Epistle to the Thessalonians, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ,"² they have thrown together the body and soul, as well as the petitions preferred for each one of them respectively,—“that by thy great goodness they may be governed and preserved evermore, both in body and soul.” God, in the government and preservation of His people, appears as their king and lawgiver, according to that word of the prophet Isaiah; "The Lord is our law-

¹ St. John i. 38.² 1 Thess. v. 23.

giver, the Lord is our king; he will save us.”¹ For it is the law of a country, the executive of which is lodged in the sovereign, which not only governs the subjects, lays them under restraint, and exacts from them contributions, but also protects them—makes their properties, their lives, and even their characters safe. And observe that this protection is for loyal subjects only; if a man will not submit himself to the governance of the law, he shall forfeit his right to be protected by the law; the law itself shall take away his property, his freedom, or (in the last resort) his life. So it is only in obedience to the government of the heavenly Lawgiver that we find our preservation; and awful indeed it is to think that a wilful and habitual sinner throws himself out of the protection of Him, in whose hand momentarily is his life, health, fortune, and every blessing which he is permitted to enjoy.

“Both in body and soul.” It is interesting to observe how faithfully the Prayer Book echoes the Bible in bringing the body into the sphere of religion, in recognising its sanctification, and the function which it has to fulfil in the service of God. Consecrated to God in Baptism as a temple of the Holy Ghost, the body is fed in the other and higher Sacrament with the symbols of Christ’s body and blood, in token and anticipation of its resurrection, according to that word of the Saviour; “Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”² Hence in the Office of the Holy Communion we are taught to pray that we may so “eat the flesh of” God’s “dear Son, Jesus Christ, and drink his blood, that our *sinful bodies* may be made clean by his body,” and also to “offer and present

¹ Isaiah xxxiii. 22.

² St. John vi. 54.

unto " God " ourselves, our souls and *bodies*, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto " Him. And the body, though now in a state of humiliation by reason of sin, is not to be destroyed or annihilated by death, but to be raised in incorruption, in glory, in power,¹ and fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body.² For its governance and preservation, then, equally with that of the soul, we are here taught to sue,—that its members may be *governed* by the indwelling Spirit of Christ, so that the ears may listen to God's word, the eyes may look with devout adoration on His works, the hands may execute His tasks, the feet run upon His errands, the mouth speak His praise,—and *preserved* also by the ever-watchful eye of Divine Providence and through the ministry of holy angels.³

But we must not omit that little but significant clause, " by thy bountiful goodness." It is impossible, I think, to find a better translation of the Latin words "*te largiente*,"—a translation at once so idiomatic, and yet which so truly seizes the spirit of the original. Our word " God " is only a modified form of the word " good ; " God is the good one—the largely, liberally, munificently, bountifully good one. " God is love,"⁴ saith the Scripture, that is, love is the foundation and essence of His character,—the first and truest conception of Him ; we are to think of Him as good, before we think of Him as wise and powerful. Even the heathen so thought of God in a measure, for the Romans bestowed upon Jupiter, their supreme Deity, the grand title " Optimus Maximus," " Best and Greatest ; " in commenting upon which Cicero observes that " we call him best (that is, most

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 42, 43.

² Philip. iii. 21.

³ See Psalm xci. 10, 11, 12 ; and xxxiv. 7 ; and Heb. i. 14.

⁴ 1 John iv. 8, 16.

beneficent) before we call him greatest, because the doing good to all is a greater, or at least a more blessed, thing than the having great power and resources.”¹ If even the heathen conceived of goodness as God’s noblest attribute, how much more reason have Christians to conceive thus of Him, who “so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”² And what an exquisite finishing touch have our Reformers given to the Deprecations and Supplications of the Litany in adding the simple word “Good” to the bare and comparatively chilling “Lord” of the original Latin Litany; “Spare us, good Lord;” “Good Lord, deliver us;” “We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord!”

¹ “Juppiter à majoribus nostris dictus est optimus maximus : et quidem ante optimus, id est, beneficentissimus, quam maximus, quia majus est certeque gratius prodesse omnibus, quam opes magnas habere.”—*Cicero de Nat. Deor.* 2, c. 25.

² St. John iii. 16.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE SUNDAY NEXT BEFORE EASTER.

Almighty and everlasting God, who, of thy tender love towards mankind, hast sent thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, to take upon him our flesh, and to suffer death upon the cross, that all mankind should follow the example of his great humility; Mercifully grant that we may both follow the example of his patience, and also be made partakers of his resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Omnipotens sempiterne Deus, qui humano generi ad imitandum humilitatis exemplum, Salvatorem nostrum carnem sumere et crucem subire fecisti: concede propitius, ut et patientiæ ipsius habere documenta et resurrectionis consortia mereamur. Per eundem Dominum.¹—*Gel. Sac.*—*Miss. Sar.*

THIS Collect is derived ultimately from the Sacramentary of Gelasius, the date of which is the close of the fifth century. The grave, sweet notes of the prayer chime in beautifully with the cadence both of the Epistle and Gospel. It should be remarked that, while the Epistle has always been the same, the Gospel has been reduced to one-half of the length which it had before the Reformation. It consisted formerly of the twenty-sixth Chapter

¹ In the Sacramentary of Gelasius, as published by Muratori [Tom. I. Col. 546], the invocation has the word "Deus" only, without any adjectives; and the last part runs thus: "Ut et patientiæ ejus habere documentum, et resurrectionis ejus consortia mereamur Christi Domini nostri. Qui tecum vivit et regnat Deus in unitate Spiritus Sancti. Per."

of St. Matthew, as well as of the bulk of the twenty-seventh. The Reformers judiciously separated the two Chapters, appointing the twenty-sixth to stand as the first Morning Lesson. It, no less than the twenty-seventh Chapter, exhibits a great many traits of our Lord's patience.

While the translators of the Collect have greatly improved upon the original by throwing a warm glow into the earlier part of it (as I shall notice more at length presently), they have certainly not rendered the latter part with accuracy. I suppose it must have struck every thoughtful reader of the English as singular that, after declaring God's purpose in the Incarnation and Death of His Son to be "that all mankind should follow the example of" Christ's "*humility*," we should then ask grace to follow the example,—not of His humility, but of His patience,—which, though a grace nearly connected with humility, is not exactly the same thing. The truth is that the latter clause (about following the example of Christ's patience) does not accurately represent the original, in which quite a distinct phrase is used from that which appears in the earlier clause. Here is a literal translation: "Almighty and everlasting God, who for the behoof of the human race, that they might have an example of humility to follow, madest our Saviour to take flesh and to undergo the cross; Mercifully grant that we may attain both to learn the lessons of his patience,¹ and also to have

¹ See St. James v. 10, 11. Canon Bright, whom I consulted on the meaning in the ecclesiastical Latin of the word "*documentum*," writes thus; "I do not think that the word *documentum* is at all common in the Sacramentaries. It seems to me that, where it is used, it is most probably used in its simplest sense of a *form of teaching*. . . . I observe that in the original Gelasian form of the Collect the reading is *documentum*. On the whole, I think that *habere documentum* (or *documenta*) *patientiæ*, would most naturally mean 'to be taught by His patience, to apprehend and take

fellowship¹ in his resurrection ; through the same Christ our Lord." To "learn the lessons of his patience," though doubtless it would lead to and involve the copying it, is not quite the same thing as "following the example of his patience." Moreover, by our translation, the point which the clause had in connexion with the Gospel, as the former clause has a point in connexion with the Epistle, is somewhat obscured. The Gospel and Second Lesson (which, as I have just said, was in the old Offices a part of the Gospel) exhibit frequent instances of our Lord's patience, as the Epistle points to the great humility of His condescension. It exhibits His patience under the agony,² His patience towards Peter,³ His patience towards Judas,⁴ His patience towards the party which apprehended Him,⁵ His patience under the spitting and buffeting of the High Priest's servants,⁶ and under the cruel mockery of His executioners,⁷ His patience before the High Priest,⁸ and before Pilate,⁹ His patience under the revilings of the passers by,¹⁰ His patience finally under the sense of God's abandonment.¹¹ And accordingly the prayer of the original Collect, grounded on this Gospel, and indeed on all the Gospels of Holy Week, is that we may learn the lessons drawn from these Gospels, which are mainly lessons of Christ's patience,

in the lessons of that example.' " A French version of the Collect, which I find in "Sursum Corda : Paroissien Romain Expliqué," p. 295 (Metz and Paris, 1859), is in exact accordance with Canon Bright's view of the meaning. Its latter clause is ; "Faites qu' instruits par sa patience, nous méritons d'avoir part à sa résurrection."

¹ See Philip. iii. 10, 11.

² See St. Matt. xxvi. 42.

³ See St. Matt. xxvi. 40.

⁴ See St. Matt. xxvi. 50.

⁵ See St. Matt. xxvi. 52.

⁶ See St. Matt. xxvi. 67.

⁷ See St. Matt. xxvii. 29, 30.

⁸ See St. Matt. xxvi. 62, 63.

⁹ See St. Matt. xxvii. 13, 14.

¹⁰ See St. Matt. xxvii. 39, 40.

¹¹ See St. Matt. xxvii. 46.

showing, of course, that we are learning them by endeavouring to put them in practice.

“Almighty and everlasting God, who, *of thy tender love towards mankind.*” What a warm, rich glow have our translators thrown into the Collect by the insertion of these few words, “of thy tender love;” and I may add what an important point of doctrine have they thus brought out in high relief! How often have Christians, in direct defiance of all Scriptural statements to the contrary, allowed themselves to entertain thoughts of God the Father, merely as a severe rigorous Judge, made placable to mankind only through the work of His Son! Whereas the work of Christ is as valuable to us for what it proves as for what it does,—for the evidence it gives of God’s willingness (or rather longing) to be reconciled to us, as for the reconciliation it actually effects between us and Him. By means of these few words, the incarnation and death of Christ, by which our redemption were effected, are traced up to their earliest source in the love of the Almighty and everlasting God towards man, according to that word of Christ’s own; “God so loved the world, that he gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”¹ And to His *tender love*. There is an idea in this word “tender,” which one would be loth to forfeit. There are forms of love which are sincere enough, but to which one could hardly apply the word “tender,”—bluff, hardy love, persistent too and wearing well, but generous rather than sympathizing. God’s love is generous, because it is in the first place sympathizing—*tender love*. “I will spare them,” says He, describing what is in His heart

¹ St. John iii. 16.

towards His true children, "as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."¹ How considerate is a father towards a child, who acts in the capacity of a servant!

"Hast sent thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, to take upon him our flesh, and to suffer death upon the cross." This is a closely-compressed abstract of the stages of our Blessed Lord's condescension, as exhibited to us in the passage selected for the Epistle. The substance of what the Apostle says is given us, but in a short summary, and a summary which omits the difficult phrases of Christ's pre-existence in the form of God, of His not thinking it robbery to be equal with God, of his emptying Himself,² and taking upon Him the form of a servant. We have had occasion to remark previously that the old Latin Collects, though quite as Scriptural in their substance as those made new at the Reformation, do not maintain as scrupulously the exact phraseology of Scripture. Here Christ's Incarnation is expressed by the phrase "taking upon Him our flesh,"—a phrase which most certainly implies His Godhead, just as does the parallel phrase in St. John's first Epistle, "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh."³ If Christ were human in His personality, it would be a truism to say that He has come in the flesh, or that He has taken flesh; for by the flesh is meant human nature, and every man necessarily takes human nature, comes in human nature, is manifest in human nature, when he is born. The flesh, be it observed, consists of two elements, which, held together during life, are separated by death. These are body and soul. Christ's body was separated from His soul, when

¹ Mal. iii. 17.

² Philip. ii. 7. ἐκένωσεν ἑαυτὸν = "made himself of no reputation,"—literally, "emptied himself."

³ 1 John iv. 2.

He gave up the ghost, His soul passing into Paradise, His body being borne to Joseph of Arimathæa's new tomb. In order to express this separation symbolically, the veil of the temple, we are told, was rent at the moment of His death. And the veil, as we are expressly given to understand in the Epistle to the Hebrews, represented the flesh or humanity of Christ; "through the veil, that is to say, his flesh."¹ Christ's death, however, was not mere death; it was not death in an honourable or chivalrous form, like death on the battlefield; it was death in the most cruel and ignominious form which death could assume, in order that sin, for which He died, might be shown to be an accursed thing and under God's ban of outlawry. Such is the force of the Apostle's words in the Epistle; "He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, *even the death of the cross.*"²

And now what lesson is to be learned from this marvellous condescension of the Saviour? "That all mankind should follow the example of his great humility." Pray observe that this is the lesson which St. Paul is impressing, when he introduces, in order to emphasize his precept, the wonderful account of the stages of our Lord's humiliation. The immediately foregoing context of the Epistle is this; "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than himself."³ And the symbolical action of washing the disciples' feet, in which the Lord's bodily stooping and menial service were emblems of His descent from the Father's throne to minister spiritual purification to sinners through His blood and His grace, was by Himself interpreted practically as a lesson of humility. "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."⁴

¹ Heb. x. 20.² Philip. ii. 8.³ *Ibid.* ii. 3.⁴ St. John xiii. 15.

“Mercifully grant that we may attain both to learn the lessons of his patience.” It requires a moment’s consideration to see why, humility having been specified in the former part of the Collect as the characteristic grace of our Lord’s career, we should be here taught to pray that we may learn the lessons, not of a Christlike *humility*, but of a Christlike *patience*. The reason, I suppose, is to be sought in the relation which patience bears to humility. They are both nearly allied graces ; but humility is the root of patience ; patience is the outcome and manifestation of humility, wherever humility is genuine. We may easily flatter ourselves that we are humble when we are not so ; and as to the humility of *condescension*, which was the form of humility exhibited by our Blessed Lord, there must be many Christians who, from having no sort of eminence from which to condescend, would have little opportunity of exhibiting it. But as to patience, there can be no room for self-deception ; and opportunities for exercising it are afforded almost daily to all. Patience under the crosses, be they little or great, which are laid upon us by God, patience under the thwartings, contradictions, oppositions, which arise from our fellowmen ; cheerful and sanguine hope in trials that things will mend, and, in specimens of misconduct and ingratitude, that *persons* will mend ; sweetness under provocations or impertinences, meekness under rebuffs, confession of error under just rebukes,—who has not the opportunity vouchsafed him of exhibiting one or more of these traits of character almost daily ? And be it remembered that, so far as we do not exhibit these traits of character, it is because we are not lowly in mind, or, in other words, because the same “mind” is *not* in us, “which was also in Christ Jesus.”¹

¹ Philip. ii. 5.

It is pride which makes men murmur under chastisements, fire up under insults, resent injuries, feel bitterly towards, and speak bitterly of, those who oppose and thwart them. "Take my yoke upon you," says Christ (to take His yoke upon us is to exhibit patience), "and learn of me" (copy my example); "for" (observe the force of this "for")—I, too, exhibited patience, since I had ever the root of patience in me,—“I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”¹ The petition that we may “learn the lessons of his patience” is only a briefer mode of saying, “that we may so learn of Him, who is meek and lowly in heart, as to take His yoke upon us.” And another Scriptural phraseology for the very same thing would be, “that we may run with patience the race that is before us, looking unto Jesus.”² The Latin Collects express Scriptural ideas in the happiest and tersest language of their own.

“And also to have fellowship in his resurrection.” This fellowship, it is implied, we shall not and cannot have, unless we learn the lessons of His patience, and follow the example of it. St. Paul sought to know the fellowship of Christ’s sufferings, and to be made conformable unto His death, as the only way open to Him of attaining unto the resurrection of the dead.³ And quoting apparently certain maxims, which from their exceeding importance had gained currency among the early Christians, he thus animates Timothy to endure; “It is a faithful saying; For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with him.”⁴ And sweetly and comfortably does our Office for the Visitation of the Sick echo this maxim; “There

¹ St. Matt. xi. 29.

² Heb. xii. 1, 2.

³ See Philip. iii. 10, 11.

⁴ 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12.

should be no greater comfort to Christian persons, than to be made like unto Christ, by suffering patiently adversities, troubles, and sicknesses. For he himself went not up to joy, but first he suffered pain; he entered not into his glory before he was crucified. So truly our way to eternal joy is to suffer here with Christ; and our door to enter into eternal life is gladly to die with Christ; that we may rise again from death, and dwell with him in everlasting life." Only by "holding fast the lessons of his patience" can we have "fellowship in his resurrection."

CHAPTER XXVII.

GOOD FRIDAY I.

Almighty God, we beseech thee graciously to behold this thy family, for which our Lord Jesus Christ was contented to be betrayed, and given up into the hands of wicked men, and to suffer death upon the cross, who now lieth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Respice, Domine, quaesumus, super hanc familiam tuam, pro qua Dominus noster Jesus Christus non dubitavit manibus tradit nocentium, et Crucis subire tormentum. Qui tecum vivit,¹ etc.
—*Sac. Greg.*—*Miss. Sar.*

THE Collect for Good Friday in the Missal of Sarum, the most popular of all the uses of the English Church before the Reformation, ran as follows:²—"O God, from whom the traitor Judas received the punishment of his crime, and the thief the reward of his confession; grant to us the benefit of thy propitiation" (*i.e.* the propitiation by Thee provided), "that, as in [the course of] his passion our Lord Jesus Christ assigned to both these men the wages

¹ This prayer was appointed to be said as a final prayer at Mass on the Wednesday before Easter. The people are directed to bow their heads, and then this prayer is to be said over them. See *Muratorius*, Tom. ii. Col. 54, and *Miss. Sar.*, Col. 295. [Burntisland, 1861.]

² Deus, a quo et Judas proditor reatus sui poenam et confessionis suae latro praemium sumpsit; concede nobis tuae propitiationis effectum; ut sicut in passione sua Jesus Christus Dominus noster diversa utrisque intulit stipendia meritorum: ita nobis ablato vetustatis errore, resurrectionis suae gratiam largiatur. Qui tecum vivit et regnat.—*Miss. Sar.* ;

they had deserved, so he may remove from us the errors of our old life, and bestow upon us abundantly the grace of his resurrection; who liveth and reigneth with thee," etc. This was open to several objections. First, the contrast between Judas and the penitent thief was forced and far-fetched; it should have been a contrast rather between the penitent and the impenitent thief. Then again, the coherence between the facts rehearsed, and the petition and aspiration founded upon them, is anything but clear. And lastly, the calling the recompence of the penitent thief's confession *stipendium meritorum*,—a wage which he had deserved,—is a positive doctrinal error. The recompence of sin is a wage; but the recompence of righteousness is a free gift, according to that word of the Apostle's, "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."¹ Nor does faith, of which the dying robber was so illustrious an example, justify us in any other manner than by throwing us upon God's mere mercy in Christ for salvation. Faith is no more meritorious than is the clinging of a drowning man to the rope which is thrown out to save him from a watery grave. Our Reformers, therefore, wisely decided to discard the old Collect used at the Communion on Good Friday, and adopt in its stead one which was used at Compline (or the closing service of the day) on Good Friday, and also on Maunday Thursday, and which was also one of the final prayers of the Mass on the Wednesday before Easter.

This Collect must be viewed in connexion with those which follow it, if its significance is to be fully perceived. Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the eve of His Passion, and before He went forth into the garden of the

¹ Rom. vi. 23.

Agony, offered that most solemn and thrilling prayer which is recorded in John xvii., in which He made Himself over by an act of self-consecration to death on behalf of His little flock ("for their sakes I sanctify myself"¹), and prayed that they might be kept after His departure, as He had kept them during His sojourn with them, in God's name, and thus might be held together in a close unity, like that which subsists between the Father and the Son; "Holy Father, keep through" (it should be "in") "thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are."² But in this prayer He also travelled on, beyond the little flock of His present disciples, to all those who should hereafter believe in Him,³ but were at present lying in sin and error. Now, in these three magnificent Collects for Good Friday the Church copies the example of her Lord in prayer, as nearly as the difference between her circumstances and His permits. She pleads His propitiatory passion and death, those sufferings to which He made Himself over for her sake. And first she pleads this death for herself, and for herself, in the first instance, considered as one flock, one household, united in one holy bond of faith and charity; "We beseech thee graciously to behold this thy 'family'" (the "this" pointing to the congregation then and there present, as a little miniature and representative of the entire Church).—But variety has to be considered in the Church as well as unity. Though Christians are one in Christ, yet how various are their stations, their positions, their duties, and their occupations! In the second Collect this variety of stations and duties is recognised; and we are taught to intercede not merely for the Church as being one body,

¹ St. John xvii. 19.² *Ibid.* ver. 11.³ *Ibid.* ver. 20.

but as a system, each part of which has its separate function to perform, and a separate department of God's service in which to minister; "Receive our supplications and prayers, which we offer before thee for all estates of men in thy holy Church, that every member of the same, in his vocation and ministry, may truly and godly serve thee; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."—But because Christ interceded for those who were not yet believers, and because, as we are instructed by His Evangelist, He in His death and passion is the propitiation not for our sins only, "but also for the sins of the whole world,"¹ the Church's intercession travels on to those who are at present living outside her pale; to Jews, who, while they acknowledge the Father, deny the Son, whose office it is to reveal the Father; to Turks, who, while they admit the Son to be a prophet, deny Him to be Divine; to Infidels, who know neither the only true God, nor Jesus Christ whom He hath sent; and to Heretics, whose case is, in a certain point of view, more miserable than that of any others, inasmuch as having once known and received the truth, they have perverted and corrupted it. Such is the beautiful and interesting connexion of thought between these three Collects.

"Almighty God, we beseech thee graciously to behold this thy family." Our Lord Himself was the first who likened His Church to a household, each member of which has his work assigned him by the master, one being set as a door-porter to watch for the rest, and one or more as stewards to bear rule, and to allot to the other members the provision needful for their wants. "The Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who

¹ See 1 John ii. 2.

left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.”¹ “Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over *his household*, to give them meat in due season?”² And St. Paul, taking up our Lord’s image, speaks of “the household of faith.”³ It should be observed how this image of a household, while it speaks forcibly of the unity which should subsist in the Church (an unity, as of an Israelite family in Egypt, gathered together with close and blood-dabbled doors to keep the Passover, while the destroying angel ranged without in the darkness, and struck every house where he did not see the blood-stains),⁴ at the same time points to variety of station and duty; for the members of the same household have different stations and correspondingly different duties. And thus the very imagery of the first Collect prepares the way for the idea of the second.

“For which our Lord Jesus Christ was contented to be betrayed;”—as if we would say, “Thy Son loved this family so dearly, that He gave Himself up to a cruel death on its behalf. Shall not His love for it avail to procure the lifting up of the light of thy countenance upon it—the sunshine of thy smile and favour?” Such is the plea here put forward.

“Was contented.” A more literal rendering of the Latin would be “did not hesitate.” So little did He hesitate, that, “when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,”⁵ displaying an alacrity, St. Mark tells us, so unearthly, so divine, that it overpowered His disciples:

¹ St. Mark xiii. 34.² St. Matt. xxiv. 45.³ Gal. vi. 10.⁴ See Exod. xii. 21, 22, 23.⁵ St. Luke ix. 51.

"Jesus went before them: and" (as they knew He was throwing Himself into the jaws of the lion) "they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid."¹ His heart was all aflame with zeal for God's glory and man's salvation, according to that word which the Psalmist puts by prophetic anticipation into His mouth; "Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, that I should fulfil thy will, O my God: I am content to do it; yea, thy law is within my heart."²

"Contented to be betrayed." The sting of ingratitude; this is the first ingredient in our Lord's cup of suffering, which is here rehearsed. How sharp it was, let us gather from His plaint in the Psalms; "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me;"³ "it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him: but it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company."⁴

"And given up into the hands of wicked men." Perhaps "*cruel* men" would be the more exact rendering. Harmful men,—men who vented their spite and malignity upon Him. Christ came unto His own, the Jews, and His own received Him not;⁵ but surrendered or made Him over into the hands of ruthless Gentiles, who, having gathered together a whole cohort of rude soldiers, insulted Him with a mocking homage,⁶ crowned Him with thorns, and, snatching from Him His mock sceptre, struck

¹ St. Mark x. 32. ² Psalm xl. 9, 10, P.B.V. ³ Psalm xli. 9.

⁴ Psalm lv. 12-14.

⁵ See St. John i. 11.

⁶ See St. Matt. xxvii. 27, 28, etc., and St. Mark xv. 16, 17, etc.

down the thorns into His brow with it, spat upon Him to indicate their contempt and aversion, and finally nailed Him to the cross of pain and agony. Hence, because the body of Christ was a sacred deposit in the keeping of the Jews, which they had deliberately surrendered to the cruelty of the Romans, St. Matthew tells us that, when St. Joseph of Arimathæa petitioned for the body, after wicked men had wreaked their malice to the utmost upon it, "Pilate commanded the body to be" (not "delivered"—the Greek word is far more exact than that—but) "given back" or "restored."¹ It had been given *up* to the Gentiles; it now had to be given *back* to its original guardians, the Jews.

"And to suffer death upon the cross." The original Latin is, "to undergo the torment of the cross." To suffer death is a more significant phrase than "to undergo torment," because death was the original penalty of sin, and as Christ's sufferings were expiatory, endured by Him as "the second man,"² the second and better representative of our race, His death should always be expressly mentioned as the climax of the penalty. Yet the "undergoing torment" of the Latin Collect may usefully remind us of the frightful bodily and mental tortures which accompanied the cross, of the agonies of Christ, the inflammation of His extremities, the burning thirst, the drawing away of human sympathizers when the Virgin retired in the charge of St. John, and, far above all in bitterness, the hiding of the Father's countenance at the last, when the smile of His favour was most needed by the human soul of the Redeemer. And as the word "torment" is used

¹ St. Matt. xxvii. 58. ἀποδοθῆναι. "Abalienarant Judæi : Josephus, senator, publico quasi nomine, recepit a gentibus, et cum Nicodemo restituit Judæis."—*Bengel in loc.*

² 1 Cor. xv. 47.

in the parable of Dives and Lazarus,¹ and elsewhere, to denote the sufferings of the condemned, the word may also remind us profitably that in that dark hour Christ endured on the cross the equivalent of that hell, which, were we to be judged by our merits, would be the portion of us all.

It is a feature of the Collect, not to be overlooked, that, though it is a prayer for the darkest day of the Christian year, it is yet terminated in the form usually employed at jubilant seasons, "Who now liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end,"² thus reminding us of the passage in the Epistle to the Philippians, which links together the deepest humiliation of Christ with His highest exaltation, and points to the latter as the crown and recompence of the former; "Being found in fashion as man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."³

¹ St. Luke xvi. 23, 24, 28.

² See "Appendix on the Terminations of the Collects and Orisons," above, p. 107.

³ Philip. ii. 8-11.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

GOOD FRIDAY II.

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church is governed and sanctified; Receive our supplications and prayers, which we offer before thee for all estates of men in thy holy Church, that every member of the same, in his vocation and ministry, may truly and godly serve thee; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Omnipotens sempiterne Deus, cuius Spiritu totum corpus Ecclesiae sanctificatur et regitur; exaudi nos pro universis ordinibus supplicantes: ut gratiae tuae munere ab omnibus tibi gradibus fideliter seruiatur. Per Dominum nostrum Iesum Christum Filium tuum, qui tecum vivit. In unitate eiusdem.¹—*Gel. Sac.*—*Greg. Sac.*—*Miss. Sar.*

THIS Collect made its first appearance in the Sacramentary of Pope Gelasius. It is found also in the later Sacramentary of Pope Gregory, who, in adopting it, added two words to it, thus giving a precedent to our Reformers for the happy expansions which they have made of the old Latin Collects, in adapting them for the Reformed Liturgy. The last clause in Gelasius' Sacramentary had run thus; "That by the gift of thy grace faithful service may be done by all." Gregory altered this to, "that by the gift of thy grace faithful service may be done to thee by all orders [of men]." The prayer is not the

¹ In this Collect, as given in the Sacramentary of Gelasius (*Mur. Tom. i. Col. 560*), the words "tibi gradibus" are left out; and the conclusion is only "Per." The "tibi gradibus" is found in Gregory's version of the Prayer (*Mur. Tom. ii. Col. 58*). See the 1st paragraph of the Exposition.

Collect proper for Good Friday, which, for reasons assigned in the last Chapter, our Reformers dispensed with, but one of several solemn prayers appointed to be said after the Gospel on this most solemn day, and coming, both in the Sacramentaries, and in the Missal of Sarum, between a prayer for the Bishops and other orders of clergy, and a prayer for the emperor or king. The idea of this sequence of prayers seems to be, that Christians are viewed first in their ecclesiastical, and then in their political relations, prayed for first as members of the Church, and next as members of the State.

“Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church is governed and sanctified.” The first Collect, also, was a prayer for the Church; but the Church was there viewed as summed up and represented in each particular congregation; “We beseech thee graciously to behold this thy family.” Comprised within four walls, and gathered for worship round one altar, the Church is naturally regarded as a family or household. But now we view the Church, not as represented by a single small section of it, but in its Catholic character, as spread throughout the world—“the whole body of the Church.” Yet, though this body is so vast, and extends so far, and though the members of it are separated from one another by vast tracts of time and space, one life pervades it all, even to the extremities, and that is the life of the Spirit—“by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church is governed and sanctified.” “Sanctified and governed” is the order of the words in the Latin Collect; and perhaps this is better, except in rhythm and to the ear, than our order. For before the blessed Spirit can govern and guide us, He must sanctify,

must dispose us to yield ourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead, before we can yield our members (under His government) as instruments of righteousness unto God.¹ Alas! that He should sanctify oftentimes, when we will not allow Him to govern, inspiring holy desires, which are never brought to good effect, and good counsels which are never followed up. And the soul yields to God the leaves of Christian profession, and the blossom of religious impressions, but no good works, no realised fruit unto holiness; it is *moved* by the Holy Ghost, not *led* by Him.

"By whose Spirit the whole body is governed." Observe that here, as in Holy Scripture, the body of the Church and its animating spirit are spoken of as distinct, and also that only one body of Christ is recognised, as there is but one Spirit which animates and rules the whole of it. "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free;"² "As the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ."³ And again; "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling."⁴ Some try to make out that the unity of Christians is simply spiritual, consists merely in the internal operations of the Holy Ghost upon the conscience, affections, and will. But this is the teaching neither of the Bible nor of the Prayer Book, which everywhere recognise an external visible organised society (or body), and a certain defined relation in which that body stands to the Holy Ghost, the relation being this, that He sanctifies and governs it.

¹ See Rom. vi. 13.

² 1 Cor. xii. 13.

³ 1 Cor. xii. 12.

⁴ Eph. iv. 4.

“Receive our supplications and prayers.” In the original it is only “supplications.” Very happily our Reformers have added “prayers,” probably with the intention of reminding us of the precept for Public Worship in 1 Tim. ii. 1; “I exhort therefore, that, first of all, *supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks*, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.” Without drawing any too refined distinction between supplications, prayers, and intercessions, we may yet say that the word “prayers” is the most generic of the three words, denoting as it does every form of approach to the throne of grace, and that “supplications” and “intercessions” are more specific words, which denote urgency, and some special request made to God on a subject which we have much at heart. The employment of the three words instead of one teaches this at least, that our prayers for all conditions of men, and for our rulers in particular, must not lapse, as we allow them too often to do, into decent formalities, but that we must strive to throw interest and sympathy into them, thinking of special cases, as prayer is offered for those who are living in error and sin, or for persons in trouble, and considering often what must be the trials and responsibilities of rulers, both in Church and State, when on all sides there prevails such a spirit of insubordination and disunion of classes.

“Which we offer before thee.” This phrase is the insertion of our Reformers, and a very happy and significant insertion it is. We are commemorating the great Offering of offerings,—“the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all,”¹ through which, applied to our consciences, we are sanctified. This offering was made for

¹ See Heb. x. 10.

all,—"not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world,"¹ and on the basis of it, on the altar of atonement which Christ reared in His Cross, we present our offerings, one of the chief of them being "supplications, prayers, and intercessions for all men,"² supplications reaching as far as the sacrifice of Christ reaches,—to the whole race of man.

"For all estates of men in thy holy Church." God's law in Grace, as in Nature, is unity in variety. We have glanced at the unity of the holy Church in the former Collect,—"*this thy family*,"—and in the former clause of this,—"*the whole body of the Church*." Now we proceed to consider how this unity opens out into variety, how vast a number of positions, stations, occupations, professions, trades, there are within the bosom of the holy Church, and how each of these has its own peculiar trials, responsibilities, difficulties, hindrances. And in the view of these trials we offer prayer in a truly catholic spirit for each and all of these "*estates*," seeing that the Lord Jesus on Good Friday gave Himself as a ransom for all, and mediated between God and all men.

"That every member of the same, in his vocation and ministry, may truly and godly serve thee." The words "*by the gift of thy grace*," which appear in the Latin Collect, are left out, by no means unjustifiably, since they are implied in the assertion already made that the Church is sanctified by the Spirit of God, and we are more than compensated for them by the happy addition of one or two words. "*In his vocation and ministry*." A man's vocation is his calling, his pursuit; and we are told in 1 Cor. vii. that every man, when he becomes a Christian, is to abide in the same calling (supposing it of

¹ 1 John ii. 2.

² 1 Tim. ii. 1.

course to be a lawful one) "wherein he was called."¹ If he was a soldier originally, he is not to lay down his arms; if he was a tax-gatherer, he is not to forsake his counting-house; but simply to heed the instructions as to integrity, contentment, and refraining from acts of wrong, which John the Baptist had given to men in those positions. Nay, if his calling was that of a slave, he was not to be solicitous about gaining his freedom (though he might avail himself of it, if it were offered him), but to regard himself as the Lord's freedman, "with good will doing service as to the Lord, and not to men,"² "knowing that of the Lord" he should "receive the reward of the inheritance: for" (says the Apostle, addressing slaves) "ye serve the Lord Christ."³ Now, if the work of a slave, done in pursuance of his vocation, but from a religious motive, be a service done to Christ, what other kind of work, done in the same spirit, shall not be at least equally so? Here, then, the "vocation" passes into a "ministry." Any and every calling which is sanctified by a godly motive, and by the aim of pleasing God in it, and contributing something to the great scheme of His service, assumes the dignity of a "ministry." I say the work itself is ministerial; although I believe that the word "ministry," as here used, implies something else besides the mere devout performance of secular duties. Added to the word "vocation," it reminds us usefully that no man is at liberty to give his whole time to his calling, whatever it be, that the Christian life consists not merely in working for God in some of the many departments of His service, but also in worshipping God both in the closet and in the Church. Christian laymen, as well as clergymen, are part of the "holy priesthood," consecrated

¹ 1 Cor. vii. 20.² Eph. vi. 7.³ Col. iii. 24.

in Baptism and Confirmation to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.¹ And if the larger part of the day of most of us must necessarily be occupied with the "vocation," time must be secured for the "ministry" of prayer, and praise, and reading, if the vocation is to have God's blessing upon it.—"Truly and godly serve thee." The first word, doubtless intended to apply chiefly to the vocation, and the latter to the ministry. The service done in "the vocation" must be "true;"—in the original the word is "faithful." "True,"—not hollow and hypocritical, as is the case where we seek in our daily work only the praise of men; nor mercenary, as where a man endeavours to serve only his own worldly ends in his work. And "faithful,"—that is, conscientious, and punctually executed. And the service done in the "ministry" must be "godly"; we must set the living God before us in our prayers and praises, regard the minutes spent in devotion as real interviews with Him, and speak to Him earnestly in them, and then with all docility listen for His voice in the reading of His word. No "ministry," which we do not make an honest effort to rescue from formality, can be "godly."

¹ See 1 Pet. ii. 5.

CHAPTER XXIX.

GOOD FRIDAY III. (I)

O merciful God, who hast made all men, and hatest nothing that thou hast made, nor wouldest the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live; Have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Hereticks, and take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of thy Word; and so fetch them home, blessed Lord, to thy flock, that they may be saved among the remnant of the true Israelites, and be made one fold under one shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.¹ [A.D. 1549.]

It may have often happened to us to see a wall running on an ancient foundation, the materials of which are mostly recent, but many old fragments—here the volute of a capital, here a piece of fluted shaft, there a block of stone

¹ The three Collects, of which this may be said to be a compilation, stand thus in the Missal of Sarum:—

Omnipotens sempiterne Deus, *qui salvas omnes homines et neminem vis perire*; respice ad animas diabolica fraude deceptas: ut *omni hæretica pravitate deposita*, errantium corda resipiscant, et ad veritatis tuæ redeant unitatem. Per Dominum.

Omnipotens sempiterne Deus, qui etiam *Judaicam perfidiam* a tua misericordia non repellis; exaudi

Almighty and everlasting God, *who art the Saviour of all men, and wouldest not that any should perish*; Look mercifully upon souls deceived by the craft of the devil, that, *all heretical perverseness being laid aside*, they whose hearts have gone astray may remember themselves, and return to the unity of thy truth. Through the Lord.

Almighty and everlasting God, who dost not shut out from thy mercy *even the infidelity of the*

with a rude inscription—have been built up into the masonry. The Collect before us resembles such a wall. Two or three of its expressions are evidently borrowed from those ancient sources, of which we have had occasion to say so much, the Sacramentaries of Gelasius and Gregory; but the greater part of it is the manufacture of Cranmer and his colleagues. But though there is much that is new in the *phraseology*, yet the line of thought is entirely ancient. In the Sacramentary of Gelasius (the date of which is the end of the fifth century), after the reading on Good Friday of the Passion of our Lord, as related in the 18th and 19th Chapters of St. John's Gospel, eighteen solemn prayers were directed to be said—two for the Universal Church; one for the Pope and the Bishop of the diocese; one for Bishops in general; one for Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, and for the Clergy in minor orders; one for all estates of men (corresponding to our second Collect); one for the Emperor or King; one for the empire or kingdom; two for the Catechumens;

preces nostras, quas pro illius populi obsecratione deferimus; ut agnita veritatis tuæ luce, quæ Christus est, a suis tenebris eruatur. Per eundem.

Omnipotens sempiterne Deus, *qui non vis mortem peccatorum, sed vitam semper inquiris; suscipe propitius orationem nostram: et libera eos ab idolorum cultura; et aggrega Ecclesiæ tuæ sanctæ ad laudem et gloriam nominis tui. Per Dominum.*

These Collects are all found in the Sacramentary of Gelasius [*Mur.*, Tom. I. Col. 362].

Jews; Hear our prayers which we offer before thee on behalf of the blindness of that people, that, acknowledging the light of thy truth, which is Christ, they may be delivered from their darkness. Through the same.

Almighty and everlasting God, *who wouldest not the death of sinners, but ever seekest their life; Mercifully receive our prayers, and set them free from the worship of idols, and bring them into the fold of thy Church, to the praise and glory of thy Name. Through the Lord.*

one for the sick, for prisoners, travellers, and sailors ; one for the afflicted and distressed ; two for heretics and schismatics ; two for the Jews ; and two for the heathen. I need scarcely say that the Turks do not appear in this catalogue of persons interceded for by the Church, for the very simple reason that the Ottoman empire was not founded till the very close of the thirteenth century,—nay, that the Ottoman religion did not come into existence till more than a century after the Gelasian Sacramentary ; for Gelasius died in 496, and Mohammed did not announce himself as a prophet till 611. Obvious as this is, it is well to call attention to it, because the doing so leads us to observe the venerable antiquity of the sources whence most of our Church prayers are derived. The religion of the false prophet traces back to a sufficiently remote antiquity ; but when it was yet in the womb of the distant future, when no eye but God's could discern it, and no tongue but that of prophecy predict it, the Christian Church was holding councils, and framing definitions of faith, and judging heresies, and offering fervent prayers, as Good Friday came round, for Jews, infidels, and heretics, little thinking of the frightful form of errorism to which time should give birth, or of the scourge which God was preparing for her own superstitions and idolatries.

Before we run through this prayer clause by clause, let us endeavour to see the appropriateness to Good Friday of prayers for all conditions of men, not only within the Church, but also outside her pale. The key to this appropriateness must be sought in that passage of St. John's Epistle ; " He is the propitiation for our sins : and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."¹

¹ 1 John ii. 2.

On Good Friday the great propitiation was made for sins. The Son of God then suffered in that human nature, which He condescended to assume. But although He assumed *human nature*, yet He did not assume, as Nestorius erroneously supposed, *a human person*;—what there was in Him of personality was all divine. Hence He is not more allied to one human person than to another, but equally to all. And hence, when He died in His human nature (for, of course, His Godhead could not suffer death), it was as if the whole of humanity had expired, and met fully God's penalty against sin.¹ And therefore the death of Christ is just as wide in its scope and intention as the race of man; it embraces the heathen who is ignorant of the truth, the heretic who depraves it, and the avowed unbeliever who rejects and opposes it, as much as the faithful who believe the Gospel and walk in the light of it. And therefore we pray for all, on the great propitiation-day, that the knowledge of the propitiation may reach all, and convert all, and fetch them home into the true fold. And this St. Paul teaches us very emphatically to do, in the directions which he gives for public worship; "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made *for all men*; for kings, and for all that are in authority" (but the kings of those days were not heathens only, but persecutors and blasphemers; Nero and Domitian were the types of them), "that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty"² (if we read only thus far, it might seem as if the Church only prayed for these,

¹ And therefore it is said in 2 Cor. v. 14; *Ἐλ εἰς ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν, ἅπα οἱ πάντες ἀπέθανον*; "If one died on behalf of all, then" (*not*, "were all dead," as in our Version,—a very serious error,—*but*) "all died,"—died in Him, when He died.

² 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2.

her princely persecutors, for her own sake, in order that she might herself enjoy repose ; but how does the passage proceed ?) " For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour ; *who will have all men to be saved*, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus ; *who gave himself a ransom for all*, to be testified in due time."¹ Now the day on which He gave Himself a ransom for all was Good Friday. And therefore on Good Friday prayers for all (which, indeed, are never out of season) are specially in place.—But, again, the Church imitates her Lord ; He set for all time the example which she follows. When first beneath the impact of the cruel nails His sacred Blood gushed forth as a propitiation for sins, in the very first moment of the Crucifixion, there burst forth from His lips a prayer for infidels and Jews ; " Father," said He, " forgive them ; for they know not what they do ;"²—forgive these four Roman soldiers and their officers, who are " aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world ;"³ and forgive also these Jews who have instigated the deed, at whose special and urgent request it is done, and who indicate their entire moral participation in it by their cruel jibes and mockeries. The intercession of the great Mediator can never be offered in vain. And but an hour or two after this prayer for infidels and Jews was offered, it received two striking answers in the conversion of a Jew and of an infidel. The penitent thief was a Jew ; had he not been so, he could never have expostulated with his comrade on the inoperativeness of God's fear upon his heart, nor would our Lord have spoken to him of Paradise, of which,

¹ 1 Tim. ii. 3-7.

² St. Luke xxiii. 34.

³ Ephes. ii. 12.

as a heathen, he could have never heard. And on the penitent thief God had mercy, taking from him in an instant of time "all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of His Word," and gathering him into the flock of the good Shepherd, who fetched home the man's soul rejoicing, and comforted it with His staff and rod—that is, with His cross (an upright and transverse beam)—and placed it in the Paradise of rest and joy.¹ And the heathen centurion, under whose orders the execution was conducted, and who probably gave the word of command to drive in the nails, he too came under the power of the intercession, "Father, forgive them." "When the centurion, which stood over against him," heard His jubilant cry of triumph, "It is finished!"² so different from the preceding cry of deep depression, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"³ and saw the joy which in that moment was suffused over the pallid and emaciated features of the Son of man, conviction was struck to his heart, which doubtless issued at Pentecost (if not previously) in conversion: "When the centurion . . . saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God."⁴

But the appropriateness of these intercessions to the day of our Lord's Crucifixion rests not only on a Scriptural, but also on a moral ground. If the events of Good Friday, as recorded in the Gospels, do not move us to tenderness of heart, no events will. There were those, as we have seen, who, even on the day of the Crucifixion, and many more at Pentecost, when the Spirit of grace and of supplications was more fully shed abroad, looked upon Him whom they had pierced with compunction and

¹ St. Luke xxiii. 39-44.² St. John xix. 30.³ St. Mark xv. 34.⁴ St. Mark xv. 39.

contrition, and mourned for Him as one mourneth for his only son.¹ And if this contrition is reproduced in us by the glance of faith, it will bring with it, as one of its elements, tenderness to others. The sense of Christ's love to ourselves, while it wrings out tears for our sin, will engender love to other sinners,—even to those who are farthest off from God and from us. And it is only in the exercise of the love so engendered that we shall be able effectively to plead for them, and to ask even for the most perverse, and persecuting, and apparently irreclaimable, that “all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of God's Word may be taken from them,” and “that they may be fetched home to His flock, and saved among the remnant of the true Israelites.”

¹ See Zech. xii. 10.

CHAPTER XXX.

GOOD FRIDAY III. (2)

O merciful God, who hast made all men, and hatest nothing that thou hast made, nor wouldest the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live; Have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Hereticks, and take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of thy Word; and so fetch them home, blessed Lord, to thy flock, that they may be saved among the remnant of the true Israelites, and be made one fold under one shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

“O MERCIFUL God.” The invocation is, as usual, suitable to the argument of the prayer. We are about to pray for the extension of God’s pardoning mercy and sanctifying grace to those who are outside the pale of His Covenant. The appropriate attribute, then, by which to address Him is clearly “merciful.”

“Who hast made all men.” The coupling of this fact with the attribute of mercy finds its warrant in the statement of the Psalmist; “The Lord is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.”¹ There is something touching, as has been already remarked upon the Collect for Ash Wednesday, in the circumstance of God’s having made all men being turned into a plea for His showing them mercy. Man was created in the image of God; and it is a feature of our own minds to be anxious to preserve, to be unwilling to destroy, that

¹ Psalm cxlv. 9.

which has cost us skill and labour in its production. The painter could not, without a pang, consign his picture to the flames, nor the sculptor dash to pieces his own statue. This sentiment towards our own handiwork is a transcript of something in the mind of God, on which we ground our appeal when we pray with the Psalmist ; "Thy mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever : forsake not the works of thine own hands."¹

"And hatest nothing that thou hast made." Like the well-known passage of the Burial Service, "In the midst of life we are in death," these words strangely resemble a text of Holy Scripture, and probably have often been mistaken for one. But they are not found in the Bible ; and the nearest approach to them in point of sentiment, which is found there, is the assertion of St. Paul to Timothy, upon which the precept of interceding for all men is based, that God "will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."² The phrase did not originate with our Reformers ; they have borrowed it from one of the Collects appointed for Ash Wednesday in the Missal of Sarum. But, though it did not originate with them, they seem to have been struck by it, and to have made good use of it ; for not only have they introduced it into the Ash Wednesday Collect, but here also, and in the second of the three final prayers of the Communion Service. As it occurs, then, three times in the Book of Common Prayer, it would seem to be specially recommended to our attention. The sinning Christian mars God's work of *grace* by his sin. The Jew or heathen, blind, hard, and proud, mars His work in *nature*, the mind having been created to be receptive of divine light, the heart to be touched with divine love, the will to yield itself to divine guidance. Therefore we

¹ Psalm cxxxviii. 8.

² 1 Tim. ii. 4.

appeal to God on Ash Wednesday to show mercy to His creations of grace, and on Good Friday to His creations of nature and providence. And we derive encouragement in our prayer by observing the way in which He proceeds in the distribution of natural blessings. He who maketh His sun to shine on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust,¹ will, we may well hope, if earnestly sued with to do so, cause the dews of grace to distil upon and soften the hard and proud heart, and the Sun of righteousness to shine upon the ignorant mind, and to illumine and kindle it into fervour.

“Nor wouldest the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live.” These words are transplanted into the Collect from the Book of Ezekiel; “As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?”² But let it be observed that the expression “be converted” does not occur in the two Ash Wednesday prayers, those being for Christians who have dishonoured their Christian profession, not for persons beyond the pale of the Christian Covenant, who need to be brought within that pale. The words, by which the assertion that “God hateth nothing that He hath made” is followed up in the Ash Wednesday Collect, are, “and dost forgive the sins of all them that are penitent,”—in the Communion Service, “who wouldest not the death of a sinner, but that he should rather turn from his sin, and be saved.” In neither is any mention made of conversion. The speaking of a sinner or a worldling, when first seriously impressed with the claims of true religion, the value of the

¹ See St. Matt. v. 45.

² Ezek. xxxiii. 11.

soul, and the efficacy of Christ's atonement, as a *converted* person, is certainly not the language of our Prayer Book, however defensible it may be on other grounds. But is it the language of the Bible? If conversion be taken, not in the simple sense of turning from sin to God in the exercise of true repentance, but in the conventional sense, which has been given it by modern religionists, of some great convulsion of the moral nature, which, at some distinct point of time, and in connexion with some particular Providential crisis, was brought about by the power of the Holy Spirit, I do not think it is. I am not denying that upon thoughtless and worldly-minded persons a great and thorough change must pass in order to their salvation,—even an opening of the eyes to see the light which is shining around them. But this is a distinct operation from the turning of the soul from darkness unto light, which must take place in the conversion of a heathen, just as the opening of a blind man's eyes is a distinct operation from bringing him out of a dungeon into the sunlight.¹ The man who is brought out of the dungeon into the sunlight corresponds to the converted *heathen*, who is placed by Baptism in the full sunlight of Christian privilege, "made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." The man whose eyes are opened to see the light corresponds to the converted *Christian*, who has tasted for the first time the powers of the world to come. And it is probably better and safer to call this last process repentance, if it were only to keep it distinct in our own minds from conversion.

"Have mercy upon all Jews," those who accept Reve-

¹ See Acts xxvi. 18, "To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light." Is it a false exegesis, is it the drawing a distinction without a difference, to suppose that these phrases represent different processes, both of which are essential to complete regeneration?

lation up to a certain point, admitting the Old Testament, but rejecting the New;—"Turks," those who accept Revelation to a further point, acknowledging Jesus as a real Prophet, but pretending to have received a revelation which is an advance upon and supersedes His¹—(the principle, therefore, of this petition for the Turks or Mohammedans will embrace Mormons, and all who claim to have received in these latter days a revelation improving upon the Gospel)—"Infidels," those who reject all true Revelation, and worship gods of man's fabrication, and believe in cunningly-devised fables like the Vedas of Indian heathenism,—and Hereticks," who, while holding the true Revelation, have depraved and corrupted and perverted it by their glosses and expositions,—a complete enumeration of religious errorists.

"And take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of thy Word." These are the roots of unbelief. "Ignorance" is in the mind or intellectual faculty. It is deprecated in our Litany under the name of "*blindness* of heart"—the word "heart" showing that the ignorance deprecated is that which has a moral root, which we are told is specially the case with Jewish ignorance; "Even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart."² Nevertheless when it" (the heart of the Jews) "shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away."—"Hardness of heart" is evidently in the heart; it is moral insensibility, such as those must labour under who can look upon an agonizing, crucified, and dying Saviour (the great object of Good Friday contemplation) without compunction. "Contempt of thy Word." This contempt resides, or at least is rooted, in the will. It comes from

¹ The word "Turk" in the Prayer Book is not a national, but a religious designation. "The Turks" are simply the representatives of the Mohammedan religion.

² 2 Cor. iii. 15.

the will's attempting to strengthen itself in an opposition, which it more than suspects to be opposition to the truth, by assuming a scornful and defiant attitude. The Jews not only crucified Christ; but by flouting and jeering, mocking and spitting upon Him, tried to persuade themselves that they despised Him.

"And so fetch them home, blessed Lord, to thy flock, that they may be saved." The fetching home is in order to the salvation, and is what must take place now, before the end of the Dispensation arrives. Observe that it is fetching home to *the flock*, not to *the fold*. The flock of Christ, though one, is, under the present economy, necessarily contained in different folds, as He Himself intimated when He said, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold" (so we translate it; but it is a mistranslation; the word is not the same as that which has just occurred; it signifies, not a *fold*, but a *flock*),—"there shall be one flock, and one shepherd,"¹—one flock contained in many folds,—our Lord is speaking not of the ultimate salvation, but of what is to be brought about in *time*, by the conversion of unbelievers and misbelievers. "Home" they are fetched, when they are brought into Christ's flock, because the Church is the home of the heart, a home which satisfies all those yearnings after sympathy, affection, peace, and security, which are instinctive in the mind of man.

"That they may be saved" (eventually) "among the remnant of the true Israelites," reminding us of our Lord's words respecting Nathanael; "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile;"² and of St. Paul's words to the Romans; "They are not all Israel, which are of Israel."³

¹ St. John x. 16.

² St. John i. 47.

³ Rom. ix. 6.

. . . "He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly ; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh : but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly ; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter ; whose praise is not of men, but of God."¹ And the word "remnant" may remind us that true Israelites, whether under the Christian or Jewish Dispensation, are *but* a remnant ; that many baptized (as well as circumcised) persons, who are by profession God's people, are not really His in the inner man of the heart, and will not be owned by Christ at the last day.

"And be made *one fold* under one shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord." This is not to be connected with the words of our Lord already quoted, "There shall be one fold, and one shepherd ;" for there the right translation is, as I have said, "one flock and one shepherd." Rather the mind is here thrown forward to a time when Christians shall be not one *flock* only (as they are at present, in virtue of their having "one hope of their calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all"),² but one *fold* also ; when all barriers between one communion and another, whether arising from the sin of man, or merely from the exigency of the circumstances in which he is at present placed, shall be broken down ; when, as is foretold in the Book of Revelation, "there shall be no more sea,"³ no more obstruction of intercourse between the different sections of Christ's flock, but the Church shall be "one body,"⁴ visibly and manifestly, grouped around the "glorious high throne"⁵ in the everlasting Sanctuary.

¹ Rom. ii. 28, 29.

² Ephes. iv. 5, 6.

³ Rev. xxi. 1.

⁴ Ephes. iv. 4.

⁵ See Jer. xvii. 12.

CHAPTER XXXI.

EASTER EVEN. (1)

Grant, O Lord, that as we are baptized into the death of thy blessed Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, so by continual mortifying our corrupt affections we may be buried with him; and that through the grave, and gate of death, we may pass to our joyful resurrection; for his merits, who died, and was buried, and rose again for us, thy Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen. [A.D. 1661.]

OUR Prayer Book is not only a treasury of devotion, but also an interesting historical monument. It recalls those early times of the Church when, amid the breaking up of the Western Roman Empire, the three great Sacramentaries were compiled; it recalls the meek and learned Cranmer, and his labours in drawing up a Service Book in the vernacular for the English Church; it recalls Bishop Cosin, and the revision which he and his committee so successfully accomplished, and which was the great result of the Savoy Conference. The Collect before us has another great historical memory clinging to it, besides that of Cosin. Singularly enough the Divines of the Reformation provided no Collect for Easter Even, perhaps because they thought that the Collect for the Sunday next before Easter was sufficiently apposite. This is the more to be wondered at, because to the Epistle and Gospel for Easter Even they paid particular attention, giving us as the Epistle St. Peter's notice of Christ's preaching to the spirits in prison, and as the Gospel the

account of the burial and the sealing of the stone,— passages much more appropriate to the day than the Epistle and Gospel which are found in the Sarum Missal.¹ Why they rejected the Sarum Collect, it is not easy to say; for it is entirely free from everything objectionable in point of doctrine, and contains, as our present Collect does, a pointed allusion to the Sacrament of Baptism,² which in the early Church it was customary to administer on Easter Even. But, whatever may have been their reasons for a step so new and unprecedented as that of furnishing an Epistle and Gospel without a Collect, thus matters stood for a period of eighty-eight years from the date of the First Prayer Book of Edward VI. The expiration of that period found the unhappy Charles I. upon the throne of this realm. He and Archbishop Laud, who had been raised to the Primacy in 1633, wished to introduce the English Book of Common Prayer into Scotland. But the Scottish Bishops pleading that the jealousies of the Scotch would set them against

¹ The Sarum Epistle (like the present Roman one) was the four first verses of Col. iii. (“If ye then be risen with Christ . . . then shall ye also appear with him in glory.”) The Gospel was the seven first verses of St. Matt. xxviii.,—the account of the interview of “Mary Magdalene and the other Mary” with the angel at the Sepulchre.

² The Collect is as follows :—

Deus, qui hanc sacratissimam noctem gloriâ Dominicæ resurrectionis illustras, conserva in nova familiæ tuæ progenie adoptionis spiritum quem dedisti; ut corpore et mente renovati, puram tibi exhibeant servitutem. Per eundem. In unitate ejusdem.

O God, who lightenest the darkness of this most holy night with the glory of our Lord’s resurrection; keep alive in the new race of children, born into thy family, the Spirit of adoption whom thou hast given them, that they, being renewed both in body and mind, may present unto thee a pure service. Through the same, our Lord. In the unity of the same Spirit.

the Book, unless it received certain alterations which might entitle it to be regarded as a new work, a committee was formed for the purpose of revising the English Liturgy, and adapting it to the Scotch Church. Among the proposed alterations¹ was the provision of a Collect for Easter Even; and, as Laud admitted that by the King's express injunction he had assisted in preparing the new Service Book, and as both his character and his position would naturally give him a leading part in any enterprise which he might join, we may believe that in this Collect we have some trace of his hand, not altogether inexpert in forms of devotion. The Collect, however, as it stands in our own Prayer Book, is not worded as its writer worded it. Bishop Cosin in 1661 re-wrote the Scotch Collect for the English Prayer Book, still retaining its main features, but pruning its redundancies, and reducing it more to the usual compass of a Collect.

¹ The most material alteration was in the Office for the Holy Communion. I give it in the words of the late Dean Hook (*Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vi. New Series, London, 1875, pp. 265, 266): "The Office for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist was considerably altered; an addition was made to the prayer for the church militant; the Collect of humble access was placed after the prayer of oblation, the latter of which began, 'Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, according to the institution of thy dearly beloved Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, we thy humble servants do celebrate and make here before thy Divine Majesty, with these thy holy gifts, the memorial which thy Son hath willed us to make, having in remembrance his blessed passion, mighty resurrection, and glorious ascension, rendering unto thee most hearty thanks for the innumerable benefits procured unto us by the same;' and ended with the words of the first collect in the post-communion of the Common Prayer Book." The above prayer of oblation, and the arrangement that the prayer of humble access should come after it, was taken from the First Prayer Book of King Edward VI. (A.D. 1549). The American Church has retained this beautiful prayer of oblation as the latter section of the prayer of consecration; but with them, as with us, the prayer of humble access *precedes* (not succeeds) the consecration.

Before giving it at length, let me, having spoken of the Book of Common Prayer as an historical monument, just glance at the failure of the attempt to thrust the Scottish Prayer Book upon the people. The new Liturgy was appointed by royal proclamation to be read for the first time in the Scotch Churches in July 1637. But the attempt to comply with the proclamation in Edinburgh was the signal for a burst of popular fury which had long been pent up in the minds of the Scotch, who perhaps may be said without disparagement to be the most polemical nation in Europe. The Seventh Sunday after Trinity, on which the new form of Prayer was to be first read, was known long after as "the stony Sabbath," or "the casting of the stools," because stones and stools were hurled at the heads of such of the clergy as ventured to read it. This opposition to the royal mandate ought to have convinced Charles and his advisers that the point should be no further pressed. The object of establishing a Liturgy must have been the edification of the people, among whom it was proposed to establish it; and how could they be edified by that which excited in them such a frenzy of indignation as made them forgetful of the reverence due to holy places and holy seasons? Most injudiciously, however, the King sent orders to the Council to insist on the Liturgy; and the result was the overthrow of Episcopacy in Scotland, and the setting up of the solemn League and Covenant, which, after being read aloud to an enthusiastic multitude, was solemnly subscribed in the Greyfriars' Church at Edinburgh, in March 1638. With such historical memories as these is the Collect for Easter Even charged. And yet, looked at in itself, it is as scriptural, as devout, as practical as any prayer has need to be. The following is the original draught of it in the Laudian Book of Common

Prayer, which it is interesting to compare with the more terse version given by Cosin to the English Church:—"O most gracious God, look upon us in mercy, and grant that as we are baptized into the death of thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ; so by our true and hearty repentance all our sins may be buried with him, and we not fear the grave; that as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of thee, O Father, so we also may walk in newness of life, but our sins never be able to rise up in judgment against us; and that for the merit of Jesus Christ, that died, was buried, and rose again for us. Amen." The meaning of both the Scotch and English Collects is the same, but the mode in which it is expressed is different. In the English Collect the petition is that *we ourselves* may be buried with Christ ("so by continual mortifying our corrupt affections *we*, etc., etc."); in the Scotch, it is that *our sins* may be buried by our true and hearty repentance, and so buried as never to rise up again to haunt and disquiet us, as Samuel's ghost rose under the witch's incantation to disquiet King Saul and plunge him into despair.¹ The image is Scriptural and forcible. We read of the "body of sin," meaning the sinful nature of man; and we are bidden to "mortify our members which are upon the earth," these members being not the members of the literal body, but the members of "the body of sin,"² in other words, the various actings of

¹ See 1 Sam. xxviii. 20.

² See Rom. vi. 6, and Col. ii. 1, iii. 5; and the Post-Baptismal Prayer, which is founded on this Scriptural phraseology; "Humbly we beseech thee to grant that we, being dead unto sin, and living unto righteousness, and being buried with Christ in his death, may crucify the old man, and *utterly abolish the whole body of sin*,"—where the word "body" cannot mean the natural or literal body, which, so far from being "abolished," is to be raised again in incorruption, as the instrument of praise and of service in a better world.

our corrupt nature. As the natural body has a life and sensibility in each of its members, in the eye, in the ear, in the hand, in the foot, so our corrupt nature has various sensations, and makes various movements, at one time a movement of pride, at another of lust, at another of jealousy, at another of indolence, at another of anger, and so forth. These various sensations and movements all hang together,—they are all living parts of our corrupt nature, just as hand and foot and eyes are all living members of one body. The prayer is, that we may not only put this corrupt nature to death, but bury it out of sight, and so bury it that it may not rise up again, and that its ghost, so to speak, may not haunt us in the hour of death and in the day of judgment. We are told that “the sting of death,”—that which is so formidable in death, that which gives death its power of hurting—“is sin.”¹ And here we pray that our sins—the members of sin’s body or of our corrupt nature—may be buried with Christ, buried in His grave, and yet never rise as He did, but be like the Lord’s grave-clothes, which He left behind Him when He rose,—put away and laid aside for ever, so as never to rise in judgment against us. And this can only be by our true and hearty repentance of them, a repentance which puts away not only the acts of sin, but also all sympathies with it, all tenderness for it, all relentings over it, if so be some of its indulgences and pleasures might be spared to us. Alas! is it not sadly true, and affirmed by our own experience, that old sins,—the sins of boyhood and youth,—though long since forsaken, partly by the grace of God, but partly also, perhaps, because we have outgrown them, and other sins, the sins of mature age, have taken their place,—do yet

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 56.

abide with us still to haunt, to harass, to hinder us,—are only dead and not buried,—that their phantoms reappear every now and then to trouble our consciences, nay, that for a moment perhaps some old habit of evil-doing or evil-thinking reasserts its sway, as much as to say, “I am not dead yet, you only half killed me”? And this is because our repentance was not thorough enough, was not as “true and hearty” as it should have been, was merely a dread of sin’s consequences, and never went on to become a hatred of sin itself, flowing from an appreciation of the love sinned against. How much reason have we to pray for such a repentance as may not only kill our sins, but bury them; for there is no such obstruction in running “the race that is set before us,”¹ as this resuscitation of dead sins from the grave of the past! And this repentance is only to be gained by that putting forth upon our hearts of the Divine power, which is so beautifully sued for in the Collect for the Fourth Sunday in Advent; “O Lord, raise up (we pray thee) thy power, and come among us, and with great might succour us; that whereas, through our sins and wickedness, we are sore let and hindered in running the race that is set before us, thy bountiful grace and mercy may speedily help and deliver us; through the satisfaction of thy Son our Lord.”

¹ Heb. xii. 1.

CHAPTER XXXII.

EASTER EVEN. (2)

Grant, O Lord, that as we are baptized into the death of thy blessed Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, so by continual mortifying our corrupt affections we may be buried with him; and that through the grave, and gate of death, we may pass to our joyful resurrection; for his merits, who died, and was buried, and rose again for us, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. [A.D. 1661.]

“GRANT, O Lord, that as we are baptized.” This Collect is not one of those which have come down to us from the primitive ages of the Church. But by this mention of Baptism it carries us back to the primitive ages. For Easter Even was one of the solemn times at which it was customary in the early Church to administer the Sacrament of Baptism. Catechumens, who had been in course of preparation for it during the forty days of Lent, were then brought to the font, and after being plunged in the laver of regeneration, and baptized into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, were clad in the white garment called the chrisom, as a symbol of their having put on Christ (“As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ”),¹ and being now spiritually clothed in His righteousness. These white garments they continued to wear until the first Sunday after Easter, when they were laid up in the vestry of the church as a memento of their baptismal

¹ Gal. iii. 27.

vow and privileges, to be produced against them in case they behaved themselves in a manner unworthy of their Christian profession.¹ It is into the centre of this state of things, into a circle of associations so different from anything we nowadays witness in the Church, that this allusion to Baptism introduces us. And it is well that our prayers should preserve, and (as it were) embalm, the memory of the old time, if only to remind us that the God of our fathers, who did "in their days" so many "noble works," is our God also. — But why was Easter Even chosen as one of the stated times for the administration of Baptism? Because the day follows upon Good Friday, when we commemorate our Lord's death, and immediately precedes Easter Day, when we commemorate His resurrection, and because the inward spiritual grace of baptism, as our Catechism teaches, is a death and a resurrection, "a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness." And there was in the primitive method of administering Baptism a symbolism of death and resurrection, which is now, by the modern method of merely sprinkling the water upon the face of the baptized, very much obscured, if not entirely obliterated. The whole body was plunged under the water for two or three moments, during which, as we cannot breathe in the water, animation was suspended—this was baptismal death—and was then lifted up again into the air and sunlight, so that the process of respiration was resumed,—this was baptismal resurrection.

"Grant, O Lord, that as we are baptized into the death of thy blessed Son." What is the meaning of our being baptized into the death of Christ,—a phrase borrowed by the

¹ Bingham's "*Antiquities of the Christian Church*," book xii. chap. iv. pp. 557-558. [London. 1852.]

writer of the Collect from St. Paul; "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?"¹ "To baptize into"² means to admit by baptism into a society or fellowship. Thus to be "baptized into Moses," is to be admitted into the society to which he gave laws, into the communion of the Jewish Church. To be "baptized into the name of Paul" would be to be formally registered among the disciples of that Apostle; and similarly to be "baptized into Christ," or "into the body of Christ," or "into the name of Jesus," is to be received by baptism into communion with Him, and into the fellowship of His Church. To be "baptized into the death of Christ," therefore, must mean to be admitted into communion with a dying and atoning Saviour, not merely with Christ as a teacher come from God (which even Nicodemus, at his first visit to Him, admitted Him to be),³ but with Christ lifted up on the tree of the cross, like the serpent in the wilderness,⁴ with

¹ Rom. vi. 3.

² The phrase "baptizing into" (or unto) is used nine times in the New Testament in addition to Rom. vi. 3, where it occurs twice (as above).

(1.) "Baptizing them into the name of" the Holy Trinity. St. Matthew xxviii. 19.

(2.) "Unto what then were ye baptized?" Acts xix. 3.

(3.) "Unto John's baptism." *Ibid.*

(4.) "They were baptized" (*ἐβαπτίσθησαν*) "into the name of the Lord Jesus." Acts xix. 5.

(5.) "Were ye baptized into the name of Paul?" 1 Cor. i. 13.

(6.) "Lest any should say I had baptized into mine own name." 1 Cor. i. 15.

(7.) "They were all baptized into Moses" (had themselves baptized into Moses, *εἰς τὸν Μωσῆν ἐβαπτίσαντο*). 1 Cor. x. 2.

(8.) "By" (*ἐν*) "one Spirit are we all baptized" (*ἐβαπτίσθημεν*) "into one body." 1 Cor. xii. 13.

(9.) "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ" (*εἰς Χριστὸν ἐβαπτίσθητε*) "did put on Christ" (*Χριστὸν ἐνεδύσασθε*).

³ St. John iii. 2.

⁴ St. John iii. 14.

Christ bleeding, agonizing, pouring out His soul unto death as the penalty of man's transgression. And we cannot be admitted into communion with an atoning Christ without coming in for our share of the benefits of His atonement, which are the washing away of past sins, and the renewing grace of the Holy Ghost.¹

But the Collect, when it speaks of Baptism, must refer to its administration to infants, this being the usual practice in long Christianized countries like our own, and cases of adult Baptism being in such countries very rare. Do infants, then, receive in Baptism that washing away of sins, and that renewal of their nature, which are the fruits of Christ's death? Unquestionably they receive all the forgiveness and grace which their condition as infants allows of. They have no actual sin to be forgiven. But there is in them the "fault and corruption of nature," attaching to every man "that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam,"² and which goes under the name of original sin. The guilt of original sin is in their Baptism washed away, and a germ of divine grace, corresponding to the germ of natural depravity, is sown in their moral nature, which, if fostered by Christian education, will counteract the evil that is in them as soon as their faculties are developed. And this Baptism does for them, because it is an instrument for applying Christ's death to them, and so bringing them in for a share of its benefits; "We are baptized into the death of thy blessed Son our Saviour Jesus Christ."

Then we proceed to follow into after life those who have been as infants admitted by Baptism into communion with a dying Christ, and made partakers of the benefits of His death. "So by continual mortify-

¹ See Acts xxii. 16; 1 Cor. vi. 11; and Tit. iii. 5.

² 9th Article.

ing our corrupt affections, we may be buried with him." "The infection of nature," says our Article,¹ "doth remain, yea in them that are regenerated." They carry about with them still the body of sin, that is, the old corrupt nature, with its various actings of lust, pride, temper, sloth, envy, and so forth. This "body of sin,"² corrupt nature, or old self (all different phrases for the same thing), received sentence of death in our Baptism, when also power to execute the sentence was communicated to us. For the death of Christ, into which we were baptized, struck a death-blow at sin, both in its condemning guilt, and in its power over the soul. But a sentence of death, after it is passed, has to be put in force. A criminal is not executed, because sentence has been passed upon him, nor even because the judge has delivered him to the officer, to be shut up in prison till the day appointed for his execution comes. We have, then, to put the corrupt nature to death, to act as its executioners, nailing it to the cross of Christ. And more than that, we have to bury it. Christ not only died, but was buried; and His burial is insisted upon as an article of faith, because it was an evidence of His having really died. Now, the best evidence that the body of sin is dead within us is that we are doing our best to bury it. To be buried is to be put away out of sight of men; as to remain unburied is to be under their eyes, infecting by decomposition the air which they breathe. If the old self, the body of sin, is allowed to remain with us unburied, it will breed a moral pestilence, which will infect our own souls and those of others. We must address ourselves to bury it then,—and how? "By con-

¹ 9th Article.² Rom. vi. 6.

tinual mortifying our corrupt affections,"¹—" continual"—our whole life must be, as it were, one great act of interment, a casting of our "earthly members"² into a cave of sepulture, and a rolling great stones to the mouth of the cave, as the Israelites did with the bodies of the five kings whom they slew and hanged on trees.³ The body of sin must be hidden away from God's eyes, from our neighbours' eyes, nay, from our own. When disquieting thoughts of our own guilt arise in our hearts, we must put them away with the thought that Christ died to purchase our pardon, and that in Him we too died, and have paid the penalty of sin. And when the various movements of the corrupt nature make themselves felt in our consciousness, and we are tempted to indulge feelings of pride, or lust, or revenge, we must allow the thought no breathing-room in our hearts, must overwhelm, crush, stifle it, turning the mind by an effort to something good and holy, or diverting it by active work. As good Bishop Andrewes prays; "Grant me grace to worship the Lord Jesus, for His cross, in crucifying the first motions of the flesh; for His death, in mortifying the flesh; for His burial, in burying evil thoughts by good works."⁴ Burying the flesh goes beyond mortifying (or killing it); to

¹ These words of the Collect should be compared with the admonition to the Sponsors at the end of the Baptismal Service, from which it is probable that they were taken, but in which, it will be observed, that there is no explicit reference to Christ's burial, but only to His death: "Remembering always, that Baptism doth represent unto us our profession; which is, to follow the example of our Saviour Christ, and to be made like unto him; that, as he died, and rose again for us, so should we, who are baptized, die from sin, and rise again unto righteousness; continually mortifying all our evil and corrupt affections, and daily proceeding in all virtue and godliness of living."

² See Col. iii. 5.

³ See Joshua x. 26, 27.

⁴ Devotions on the Creed for Sunday, in the "Preces Privatae."

mortify is to inflict a death-wound; to bury is to put away out of sight and mind.

“And that through the grave, and gate of death, we may pass to our joyful resurrection.” The point to be remarked here is that the connecting link between death and resurrection is burial,—“the grave and gate of death.” It was so with our Lord. He did not rise from the cross, after He had given up the ghost thereon; He must first pass through the sepulchre, and lie there within death’s jurisdiction for two nights. I say, within death’s jurisdiction; for the words “gate of death” have no doubt reference to the Eastern custom of administering justice in the city gates. Our Lord could not have risen again without having been first formally consigned by burial to the power of death. And, similarly, while the old self, “the body of sin,”¹ still is allowed to hang about us, as if we were chained to a corpse, and while we draw our breath in a moral atmosphere tainted by it, we too cannot “attain unto the resurrection of the dead,”² either spiritual or bodily. Sentence of burial, as well as of execution, was passed upon the old self in Baptism, and was symbolized either by hiding the body under the water, or throwing water upon it, just as earth is thrown upon the corpse at a funeral; and this sentence must be executed by the putting away of sin in all its actings, if our Baptism is to take its full and legitimate effect within us, if the force of those words is to be realised within us, “Buried with him in baptism;”³ “Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death,”⁴—solemnly consigned to death’s power and jurisdiction.

¹ Rom. vi. 6.

³ Col. ii. 12.

² See Philip. iii. 11.

⁴ Rom. vi. 4.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

EASTER DAY.

' Almighty God, who through thine only-begotten Son Jesus Christ hast overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life; We humbly beseech thee, that, as by thy special grace preventing us thou dost put into our minds good desires, so by thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Deus, qui hodierna die per Unigenitum tuum eternitatis nobis aditum devicta morte reserasti: vota nostra quae praebendo aspiras, etiam adjuvando prosequere. Per eundem.¹—*Greg. Sac.—Miss. Sar.—*

THE revision of old prayers, under light thrown by the Church's experience upon her needs, was not a new thing in the time of our Reformers. It had been done long before their days by the editors of the Sacramentaries. Our Easter Collect furnishes an instance of this. The first half of it is found in the Sacramentary of Gelasius. But only the first half. Gregory, thinking probably that more point could be given to the petition of the Collect in connexion with the doctrine of

¹ The end, as given by Muratori [Tom. ii. Col. 67], is *Per eundem Dominum nostrum*, etc.

grace, which had been assaulted by the Pelagian heresy, rewrote the latter half of the prayer. The petition of Gelasius's Collect had simply asked that "through the renewing of the Spirit we may rise from the death of the soul."¹ That which Gregory substituted, and of which our Reformers have given us a free and very noble translation, bringing out most beautifully the meaning which lies hid in the original words, runs as follows; "Those desires which, by preventing us [with thy grace] thou dost make us to breathe [towards heaven], further, also, we beseech thee, by thy help." It will be admitted on all hands, that this is, as Canon Bright² calls it, "a terse and vigorous summary of the doctrine of grace." But perhaps it may seem to some not to cohere with the former part of the Collect as well as the old petition of Gelasius did. After rehearsing the fact of our Lord's conquest of death, and opening the gate of everlasting life, it seems every way appropriate to ask that, "through the renewing of the Holy Ghost we may rise from the death of the soul." But the connexion of that sublime

¹ The Collect of Gelasius ran thus :—

Deus, qui *per* Unigenitum tuum æternitatis nobis aditum, devicta morte, reserasti : da nobis, quæsumus, ut qui Resurrectionis Dominicæ solemnia colimus, *per* innovationem tui Spiritus a morte animæ resurgamus. Per Dominum.
—[*Mur.* Tom. i. Col. 573.]

O God, who *through* thy only-begotten Son hast overcome death, and opened to us the approach to everlasting life; Grant us, we beseech thee, that we, who celebrate the festival of the Lord's resurrection, may, *through* the renewing of thy Spirit, rise from the death of the soul. Through the Lord.

There is an evident and instructive correspondence between the two "throughs." It is through the only-begotten Son that death has been overcome, and the gate of life opened. It is through the renewing of the Holy Ghost that we rise from spiritual death.

² "Ancient Collects," [Oxford and London : 1869,] p. 219.

opening with the heavenward aspirations of the Christian, and the request that God would further them, and, as our Reformers have expressed it, "bring them to good effect," is not equally apparent. We trust, however, that in the course of our observations the real and deep-seated coherence between the earlier and later clauses of this fine prayer will transpire.

"Almighty God, who through thine only-begotten Son Jesus Christ." There is a twofold propriety in calling our Lord God's "only-begotten Son" in connexion with the high festival of Easter. "Jesus Christ," says St. Paul, "was declared to be the Son of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead."¹ His resurrection was *the proof and evidence of his Sonship*. But, more than this, His resurrection was *itself a generation*, even as His birth had been,—an engendering Him anew from the dark womb of the grave into the light and life of God's countenance. "We declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee."² Thenceforth He is, as He is styled both by St. Paul and St. John, "the first-born, or first-begotten, from the dead."³ The term "first-born" points, it is true, to the fact that His people will be made partakers of resurrection with Him,—will be drawn after Him in the train of His triumph; yet it is He, and He alone, who hath won the triumph, and set open the gate of everlasting life, to give them access. He, and

¹ Rom. i. 4.

² Acts xiii. 32, 33.

³ Col. i. 18, and Rev. i. 5.

He "only," is "the Resurrection."¹ In Him, and in Him "only," "shall all be made alive."²

"Hast overcome death." The task of *overcoming* death demanded the might of God's only-begotten Son. No man before Jesus Christ overcame death, or could have overcome it. Enoch and Elijah eluded the conflict with death; but to elude a conflict with an adversary is a different thing from meeting and conquering him. The Shunamite's son, Jairus's daughter, and others, were miraculously resuscitated; but as, after a few more years of life, death claimed them a second time, they did not overcome him, but he them. But "Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him;"³ nay, rather, He hath dominion over death.

"And opened unto us the gate of everlasting life." It is in this clause that the coherence between the former part of the Collect and its petition is to be sought. As a token that this gate was closed against man when he fell, he was driven forth from the happy garden, and debarred from access to the tree of life which would have immortalised him, by Cherubims with "a flaming sword that turned every way,"⁴ meet symbol of the law of God, which is sharp, subtle, and spiritual, penetrating to the thoughts and intents of the heart, and pointing to every quarter of the compass of human duty. But the Son of God, having, in the nature which belongs to all of us in common, fulfilled every requirement of this com-

¹ It is observable that in the three first Easter Collects,—those for Low Sunday and the Second after Easter, no less than in the Collect for the Festival itself,—Christ is spoken of as God's "*only* Son." Though His Saints, like Himself, will rise from death, to die no more, it will be only in virtue of His triumph over death, in respect of which He is unique.—St. John xi. 25. ² 1 Cor. xv. 22. ³ Rom. vi. 9. ⁴ Genesis iii. 24.

prehensive, spiritual, and "fiery law,"¹ and having in His cross, and passion, and precious death, endured and exhausted the penalty thereof, not only broke an entrance for Himself into the heavenly Paradise, but, after doing this, turned and set the door of it wide open for His people to follow, bringing life and immortality to light,² and setting before our eyes in the long vista of eternity the marriage-supper of the Lamb, at which we have been all bidden to sit down, "in the marriage garment required by God in holy Scripture,"³ first in our Baptism, and afterwards as often as the call of the Gospel has been made to us. And in reference to this glorious prospect, set before us in the perspective of the future, He says to us, as He said to the angel of the Church at Philadelphia, "Behold, *I have set before thee an open door*, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength,"⁴ and we say to Him, as often as we sing *Te Deum*, "When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death: *thou didst open the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers.*"

"We humbly beseech thee, that, as by thy special grace preventing us thou dost put into our minds good desires." Our Lord has done more for us, who invoke God's name in this Collect, than merely set open the gate of everlasting life. That He has done for all mankind, heathen as well as Christian, inasmuch as He obeyed and suffered in the nature common to all. But to us He has given "special" and distinguishing grace. He ordained that we should be born in a Christian country, so as to live continually under the sound of His gospel, thus not only providing for us salvation, but making known to us the provision. He ordained that we should

¹ Deut. xxxiii. 2.² See 2 Tim. i. 10.³ See Exhortation in Communion Service.⁴ Rev. iii. 8.

be brought to Baptism in infancy, and there receive, while utterly unconscious of it, remission of the guilt of original sin, and a germ of grace antagonistic to the germ of natural corruption. In all this He "prevented" us, that is, went before and anticipated any effort on our part. He was before us in the field of our hearts, and, when we woke up to a sense of right and wrong, we found Him working there. And what are the results of this "preventing grace" in our present experience? Good desires, holy wishes, pure aspirations sweeping over the parched and arid desert of the soul, like gales from the spice islands over mariners who are tossed on the barren sea. Longings to be better men and women than we are. Longings to feel God's smile shining in upon the soul, and to sun ourselves in its warmth. Longings to be more like Christ, more unselfish and more pure. Longings to sit down, when the Bridegroom comes, at the marriage-supper of the Lamb. These longings come from God's "*special* grace preventing us." They constitute the strength which Christ gave us, when He opened the gate of everlasting life, and set us full in front of it. As it is said, "Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength." What is now needed is that the "little strength" should become much, that we should "go from strength to strength,"¹ receive "grace for grace" out "of his fulness,"² until at length in the heavenly Zion we appear before God.

"So by thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect." "Continual" is an insertion of the translators, and a most significant one. The first impulse to enter in at the open gate of everlasting life came purely

¹ Psalm lxxiv. 7.

² St. John i. 16.

and simply from God's Spirit—from "grace preventing us." We had no share whatever in it; human endeavour found no place here. Subsequently, when the good desire has to be brought to good effect, human endeavour does find place. For those who are old enough to be moral agents at all, there must be an effort and a struggle to enter in, as it is said; "Strive to enter in at the strait gate."¹ But though our most earnest endeavours are a necessary condition of success, they are not the only, nor the principal, condition. God's "continual help," His help at every stage of the process of sanctification, is as much demanded as the original impulse which He gives. He must work concurrently with us, as well as antecedently to us, not only "preventing us, that we may have a good will;" but also "working with us when we have that good will" (Article x.)

"We may bring the same to good effect." For we may not, we must not, rest in "good desires." Balaam would have entered in at the gate of everlasting life, if a devout aspiration had sufficed; for he said with great sincerity and fervour; "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!"² "Good desires," says Francis of Sales, "are the flowers of the heart." A show of blossom is a beautiful thing; but a show of blossom is not fruit; the blossom falls off, the fruit abides. There is a Jacob's ladder set up on earth through the mediation of the Redeemer, the top of which reaches to heaven; and the Lord, standing above it³ at the opened gate of everlasting life, says to the soul of each disciple, "Come up hither."⁴ Moreover, He has furnished us with angels' wings to help us in our upward journey,

¹ St. Luke xiii. 24.

³ See Gen. xxviii. 12, 13.

² Num. xxiii. 10.

⁴ Rev. iv. 1.

the wings being "good desires." But to what purpose are the wings, if we will not use them to rise, if we will not plant our feet upon the stairs of the great ascent, if we allow the wings to be singed by the fires of earthly concupiscence, while our feet are entangled by the sin which so easily besets us? Lord, by the attraction of Thy cross, by the power of Thy resurrection, yea, by the Holy Spirit, which Thou didst shed forth after Thine ascension, draw us after Thee, draw us unto Thee, "with cords of a man, with bands of love."¹

¹ Hosea xi. 4.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Almighty Father, who hast given thine only Son to die for our sins, and to rise again for our justification ; Grant us so to put away the leaven of malice and wickedness, that we may alway serve thee in pureness of living and truth ; through the merits of the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. [A.D. 1549.]

THIS Collect is due to our Reformers.¹ As the Prayer Book was originally drafted in 1549, it was appointed for the second Communion on Easter Day, as also for Easter Tuesday. Bishop Cosin at the last Review transferred it from Easter Tuesday, as the Collect of which it stood in the Black Letter Prayer Book of 1636, to the First Sunday after Easter. It falls in very aptly with the associations of this Sunday. For on this Sunday the Services of the primitive Church had reference to the circumstances and wants of those who had received Baptism on Easter Even. This was the Sunday when these neophytes

¹ It was substituted in 1549 for the following, appointed by the Sarum Missal to be said on the "Dominica Prima post Octavas Paschæ :"—

Præsta, quæsumus, omnipotens Deus, ut qui Paschalia festa peregrimus, hæc, te largiente, moribus et vita teneamus. Per Dominum.—
[*Miss. Sar.*, col. 385. Burntisland, 1861.]

Grant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that we, who have completed the solemnisation of the Paschal festival, may, through thy bountiful goodness, hold fast the spirit of it in our life and conversation. Through the Lord.

Certainly the Collect, which has superseded this ancient one, is much fuller of Christian doctrine, and (as we have already seen that all the modern Collects are) much more express in its references to Holy Scripture.

laid aside and deposited in the churches the white garments, which they had received in connexion with their Baptism, and had worn during the eight subsequent days. Such persons were, of course, to be admonished that they should keep their baptismal vow. Hence the old Introit, which began *Quasi modo geniti infantes*, "As new-born babes, [desire the sincere milk of the word]",—a circumstance which led to the Sunday being called "*Quasi modo* Sunday." Hence, too, the reminder in the Epistle, that those who are indeed born of God overcome the world, and its reference to the Spirit and the water that bear record on the earth, and to the Three that bear record in heaven, into the name of which Three we are baptized.¹ And hence, perhaps, the mention in the Gospel of Christ's grant to His Church of the power of absolution, the first of all absolutions being that conferred in Baptism.² Now, if a prayer were to be drawn up for newly-baptized persons, that they might duly perform their vow, it would be difficult to frame a more apposite petition than this, that they might so put away the leaven of malice and wickedness, that they might *always* serve God (serve Him *perpetually*, even after laying aside that outward white garment, which, in the early Church, was made the emblem of baptismal innocence) in pureness of living and truth.

Three features strike us in this Collect, the two first characteristic, more or less, of all the Reformation Collects, the last common to them with those which have come down to us from an earlier source ; 1st, a reference to the Epistles of the New Testament rather than to the Gospels, which makes these Collects (generally speaking) more doctrinal than the older prayers ; 2dly, direct citation of the very words of Scripture ; 3dly, balanced clauses, with

¹ See 1 John v. 4, 7, 8 ; and St. Matt. xxviii. 19.

² See St. John xx. 23.

a rhythm for the ear, as well as some antithesis or correspondence for the mind.

“Almighty Father,” a form of invocation which occurs nowhere else among the Collects; but a very consolatory, and a beautifully appropriate one. First, the Collect is an Easter Collect; and, since it is by the resurrection of Jesus Christ that God hath begotten us again unto a lively hope,¹ the calling Him “Father” is here specially apposite. Next, the Sunday is, as we have seen, specially associated in the practice of the primitive Church with Baptism. In Baptism “I was made a member of Christ, the child of God.”² “The child of God,” because “a member of Christ.” For it is impossible to be grafted into the true Vine, made members of the body of which Christ is the Head, without participating in the Sonship of Him, to whom the Father said in raising Him from the dead, “Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.”³ Again, the Epistle beginning “Whatsoever is *born of God* overcometh the world,” in the opening of the Collect God is appropriately invoked as *Father*.—And the title “Almighty” is equally appropriate with that of “Father.” For Christ’s resurrection, which we are still celebrating, is spoken of as the most stupendous achievement of Divine power,—“the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, *according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead.*”⁴

“Who hast given thine only Son to die for our sins, and to rise again for our justification;”—a reference to St. Paul’s words in Rom. iv. 24, 25, “Jesus our Lord . . . who was delivered” (surrendered to sufferings and death by His

¹ See 1 Pet. i. 3.

² Second Answer in Church Catechism.

³ See Acts xiii. 33.

⁴ Eph. i. 19, 20.

Father, by Himself, and subordinately by the Jews and Judas Iscariot) “for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.” The passage has given occasion to lengthy expositions from commentators ; but is not really difficult. Justification is a forensic term ; and means the sentence of a tribunal in a prisoner’s favour—a sentence of acquittal. Our sins made Christ’s death (He being our Representative, and taking our sins upon Him) a necessity ; He died for our sins, bare them in His own body on the tree.¹ And our acquittal equally made His Resurrection a necessity. For it was by His Resurrection that God the Father declared Himself satisfied with Christ’s atoning work, and gave sentence of acquittal upon mankind as viewed in Christ. When God bruised and put Christ to grief, He was really punishing us ; and when—after Christ’s death and passion—He raised Him from the dead, He was really giving sentence of acquittal upon us. Without the Resurrection of Christ, there would have been no evidence of God’s forgiveness of man’s sins, or of His acceptance of Christ’s sacrifice. And the very first boon which comes to man in the train of Christ’s Resurrection is God’s absolution. For when, in the Gospel of the day, Christ for the first time after His Resurrection meets His assembled Apostles, He comes with “Peace be unto you,” and “Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them.”²

“Grant us so to put away the leaven of malice and wickedness.” This petition is a reference to, and a citation from, 1 Cor. v., where St. Paul bids the Corinthians to excommunicate an incestuous member of the Church, who had brought discredit upon their body.³ This, however, he makes the occasion of a precept, which reaches far beyond the church life of the community, into the life

¹ See 1 Pet. ii. 24.

² St. John xx. 19, 23.

³ See 1 Cor. v. 7, 13.

of each individual composing it. "Christ our passover" (our Paschal Lamb), says he, "is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness." The allusion to the putting away the old leaven would be vividly significant to a Jew, and come home to him with a force which we can hardly appreciate. In the seven days which followed the Feast of the Passover, the Jews held themselves bound to keep absolutely clear of every kind of leaven, and, in order to effect a thorough riddance of it, they first made a *purging out* of it, cleansing every part of their household stuff to which it might by possibility adhere; secondly, a *searching out*, looking with wax candles into all the crevices of their houses, even into the mouse holes; thirdly, a *burning out*, which was done by putting all the leaven into a little heap and setting fire to it; and lastly, a *cursing out*, the recital of a formula in which they prayed for the scattering and destruction of any small particle which might perhaps have escaped notice¹—a sufficiently striking image of the thoroughness with which God would have us put away sin, and exterminate it root and branch.—But sin is here termed "malice and wickedness,"² the first word probably denoting uncharitable sentiments towards our neighbour, and a *feeling* of grudge and malignity, the second, wicked *deeds* in the widest sense of the term—against God, our neighbours, and ourselves—sins, crimes, and vices—as the same word is used in Acts iii. 26, "God sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities."³ Not but that the word "malice" also sometimes denotes sins against God; for it is used of the sin

¹ Godwyn's "Moses and Aaron," Book iii. chap. 4, pp. 109-10.
[Ed. London: 1672.]

² κακία καὶ πονηρία.

³ ἀπὸ τῶν πονηριῶν ὑμῶν.

of Simon Magus, which was an unhallowed trafficking in sacred things, and is there translated "wickedness."¹ We shall not be mistaken if we take the two words together as denoting every form of moral and spiritual evil.

"That we may alway serve thee in pureness of living and truth." The Latin translation, made by order of Queen Elizabeth in 1560, renders this "in purity of faith and life."² It is evident that the translator took "living"

¹ Acts viii. 22.

² And so also Canon Bright's and Mr. Medd's Latin Version of the Book of Common Prayer (Rivington, 1865), whose translation of the Collect we here place side by side with that of Aless:—

Aless, 1560.

Omnipotens Pater, qui dedisti Filium tuum, ut pro peccatis nostris moreretur, et pro justitia nostra resurgeret, præsta, ut abjecto fermento malitiæ et nequitiae, in puritate fidei et vitæ tibi perpetuo serviamus. Per, etc.

Bright and Medd, 1865.

Omnipotens Pater, qui dedisti Filium tuum unicum, ut propter delicta nostra moreretur, et propter justificationem nostram resurgeret: Præsta ut, abjecto fermento malitiæ et nequitiae, in puritate fidei et vitæ tibi perpetuo serviamus. Per merita ejusdem Filii tui Jesu Christi Domini nostri. Amen.

The rendering "in puritate fidei et vitæ" is found also in that now scarce book, Dr. Richard Mockett's "*Doctrina et Politia Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ.*" [Londinî: Apud Joannem Billium, 1617. *Cum privilegio*]. This translation of the Prayer Book attained a great notoriety from its omitting the first clause of the Twentieth Article upon the power of the Church. Mockett, its author, was Chaplain to Archbishop Abbot, and Warden of All Souls College, Oxford.

In 1665 a Greek translation of the Prayer Book was put forth at Cambridge under Bishop Pearson's superintendence, in which "truth" is made to depend upon "in," (as in the text of 1 Cor. v., from which the expression is drawn), not upon "pureness,"—ὥστε ἐν τῇ τοῦ βίου εὐδικρινείᾳ τε καὶ ἀληθείᾳ σοι λατρεύειν). And this view of the meaning of "pureness of living and truth," is taken in some Latin translations subsequent to 1665. Thus, in the translation of 1670, the words are rendered "*in puritate vitæ et veritate*," as they are also in the Latin Prayer Book of Queen Anne's reign [Londinî, 1703], in the frontispiece of which is an engraving of the Queen on her knees before a table, on which is an open book, over which is written, "*Liturgia Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ*;" and the translation of 1727

and "truth" to be under the same bracket, that is, understood the word "pureness" to refer to the word "truth" as well as to the word "living," "pureness of living and pureness of truth," the first denoting moral soundness, and the second doctrinal soundness. It may be much questioned whether this was exactly what St. Paul meant by "the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth;"¹ but it is certain that this is what those who drew up the Collect supposed him to mean. And a most wholesome lesson it is for us, and one most necessary for these, and, indeed, for all times, that we should regard as leaven not merely sins but also false doctrine. Our Lord Himself spoke of false doctrine as leaven, when He bade His disciples beware of leaven, meaning, however, not the leaven of bread, but the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees.² And of this we may be quite sure, that error in principle will not long work in the Church, without first corrupting the Church's worship, and then engendering laxity and worldliness of practice. If but a grain of false doctrine be admitted into the mind, it will work stealthily and rapidly, and will spread itself with wonderful speed and power, like leaven, through the entire religious system.

In conclusion, how instructive is it that, when we have been seeking from God absolute spotless purity, both in doctrine and life, we should solemnly remind ourselves that this purity, even if we could entirely attain to it, could not be the ground of our acceptance—that that can only be "through the merits of the same thy Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord!"

(having in the frontispiece an engraving of a congregation, the worship of which is being conducted by the clergyman and the clerk), gives the latter part of the Collect thus; "*da ut, abjecto improbitatis malitiæque fermento, et purâ vivendi ratione et verè Tibi semper serviamus.*"

¹ 1 Cor. v. 8.

² See St. Matt. xvi. 11, 12.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Almighty God, who hast given thine only Son to be unto us both a sacrifice for sin, and also an ensample of godly life; Give us grace that we may always most thankfully receive that his inestimable benefit, and also daily endeavour ourselves to follow the blessed steps of his most holy life; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. [A.D. 1549.]

THE Collect which is found in the Sarum Missal for the Second Sunday after Easter¹ is a petition for Christian joy, founded on the exaltation of our Lord Jesus Christ after He had humbled Himself, and become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. It rings with the echoes of Easter joy, and very beautiful is the way in which the Christian's present joy in Christ's salvation is spoken of as ultimately expanding into, and merging in, what our form of Daily Absolution calls God's "*eternal joy*,"—the joy to which the Saviour's voice will invite, when He says to the servants who have improved their talents, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."²

But beautiful and edifying as the Sarum Collect is,

¹ Deus, qui in Filii tui humilitate jacentem mundum erexisti; fidelibus tuis perpetuam concede lætitiā, ut quos perpetuæ mortis eripuisti casibus, gaudiis facias sempiternis perfrui. Per eundem.—*Gel. Sac.* [*Mur.* i. 583]—*Miss. Sar.*

O God, who by thy Son's humbling himself hast raised up a fallen world; Grant unto thy faithful people perpetual joy, that they whom thou hast snatched from the dangers of perpetual death, may be brought by thee to the fruition of eternal joys. Through the same.

² St. Matt. xxv. 21, 23.

we think that our Reformers substituted for it a composition of much more solid excellence. This prayer is framed according to the best type of Collects. It is remarkable for balance, balance not only in the style, but in the doctrine which it expresses. With two masterly touches it summarises the whole benefit of Redemption, as consisting in the provision of a sin-offering and of a perfect example. And not less happily it summarises the duty of a Christian, as consisting, first, in reception, and, secondly, in imitation. The richness and fulness of thought compressed into the seven or eight lines of this brief prayer is really remarkable. Perhaps we should not err in saying that it embraces more matter than any other Collect. And it is built upon, and stands in living relation to, the Epistle and Gospel for the day, which certainly cannot be said of the mediæval Collect.

“Almighty God, who hast given thine only Son.” It will be observed that the opening of this Collect is nearly the same as that of the preceding Sunday, which runs thus; “Almighty Father, who hast given thine only Son.” And the Christmas Collect begins in the same way, with this difference, that there the gift of Christ is said to be for sympathy and community of lot, here for expiation and imitation; “Almighty God, who hast given us thy only-begotten Son to take our nature upon Him, and as at this time to be born.” Observe that God is said to give Christ to man, both on the occasion of His birth, and on the occasion of His resurrection,—His resurrection being, indeed, His second birth, when from the womb of the grave, a new tomb hewn out in a rock wherein was never man yet laid,¹ the Prince of life came forth in a spiritual

¹ St. Luke xxiii. 53; St. John xix. 41.

and incorruptible body, the first among the children of God and of the resurrection,¹ "the first-born from the dead that in all things he might have the pre-eminence."² And St. Paul, therefore, moved by the homogeneousness of the resurrection of Christ with His nativity, applies to the former that passage of the Psalms, which we might perhaps think more naturally referable to the latter; "We declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, *this day have I begotten thee.*"³ In the Christ of Christmas we have the gift of Divine sympathy; in the Christ of Easter the gift of Divine succour.

"Thine only Son." In the original draught of the Collect, and down to the edition of the Prayer Book in 1596, the words were "thy *holy* Son,"—no doubt a printer's blunder, which, however, had an existence of nearly half a century.—It enhances the love of God infinitely, that He who was given for sympathy and succour was not His Son, as we are, by adoption, but by nature,—a part of Himself, bound up with His own eternal existence in the Triune Godhead; "God so loved the world, that he gave his *only-begotten* Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."⁴

"To be unto us both a sacrifice for sin." This is the great *spiritual* benefit conferred upon us by Christ. "Christ also suffered for us,"⁵ it is said in the Epistle; and again, in a later verse of it, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree."⁶ But let us not suppose that the sin-offering made by Christ exhausts

¹ See St. Luke xx. 36.² Col. i. 18.³ Acts xiii. 32, 33.⁴ St. John iii. 16.⁵ 1 Pet. ii. 21.⁶ 1 Pet. ii. 24.

the sacrificial aspects of the Saviour's work. Sin-offerings were only one class of offerings under the law, and not the most dignified class. There are three ideas in sacrifice, which, when the ritual system of the law of Moses was fully developed, were kept quite clear and distinct. The first is that of sacrifice for sin,—expiation. The second is that of dedication, or consecration, either of self, or of something that belongs to and represents self. The third is that of sacrifice in acknowledgment of some mercy or deliverance,—thank-offering. Our blessed Lord not only offered for us the sin-offering, that the guilt of our sins might be blotted out, but also consecrated Himself to God, and to the service of man, in a life of holy obedience and deeds of love, thus giving Himself for us as “an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour,”¹ presenting not only the sin-offering of an expiatory death, but the burnt-offering of a soul all aflame with love and zeal, and the meat-offering of sympathy with, and labours for, His neighbour.² In a word, the ensample of godly life was in a certain important aspect of it “a sacrifice,” no less than the death of Christ.

“And also an ensample of godly life.” Here, however, the Lord's example is regarded in the aspect of a *moral* benefit to us, just as His death had been regarded in the preceding clause as a *spiritual* benefit. Cranmer was led to put the two together, the sacrifice for sin and the ensample, because the text in the Epistle does so. “Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.”³ The particular feature of Christ's example which we are recommended to follow is

¹ Eph. v. 2.

² See, for the expansion of this thought, the Rev. Andrew Jukes's “Law of the Offerings.”

³ 1 Pet. ii. 21.

not brought out in the Collect, but is seen at once when we look at the context of the passage in the Epistle. It is, perhaps, a feature which presents more difficulty than any other to the imitator,—that of bearing patiently indignities and rough usage, which have not been deserved, or which are even the requital of services. The Apostle is speaking to Christian slaves, and exhorting them to be submissive and obedient, even to “froward” masters. When these slaves, however faithful and industrious in their master’s service, were discovered by him to be worshippers of the true God, and to resort to Christian assemblies in order to do homage to Christ, their reward oftentimes was the lash (whence the Apostle makes mention of the stripes of Christ), or bitter reviling, or a blow on the sudden, which felled them to the earth. “Which all was your Divine Master’s portion,” says the Apostle; “and yet He endured it all with patience and sweetness,” “who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.”¹ The members of His Church now represent Him upon earth; and they have to fill up that which is behind of His sufferings, in submitting themselves also with meekness and love to the human spite which is vented upon them for righteousness’ sake. The Apostle would say to the slaves suffering from maltreatment; “When, though faultless towards your master, ye are reviled and scourged for the mere exercise of your religion, you bear the sins of those masters, and feel the effect of them in your own body, not of course expiating the sins, as Christ did, but putting yourself in precisely the same moral attitude which He assumed.” Christ was an example in His death

¹ 1 Pet. ii. 23.

and passion, as well as in His life, and it is this part of His example which is most crucial of Christian principle, most distinctive of a true, in contrast to a mere nominal, follower.

“Give us grace that we may always most thankfully receive that his inestimable benefit.” In these words we pray in effect for faith in Christ’s sacrifice for sin, the faith whereby the sacrifice may be made available to us. The great doctrine taught in this clause is that faith is reception, according to that word of the Evangelist’s, “As many as *received* him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that *believe* on his name.”¹ To believe on Christ’s name is exactly equivalent to receiving Him. And this reception of Him and “His inestimable benefit” there must be, before there can be, and in order that there may be, any sincere “endeavour to follow the blessed steps of his most holy life.” In grace, no less than in nature, or rather more emphatically than in nature, it is impossible to work except in a strength and by an energy previously communicated to us, and communicated independently of ourselves. In order to stir his limbs for any bodily action, how much must a man receive from God in the first instance! He must have life, in order to stir. He must have light, in order to see what he is doing and where he is going. He must have a certain amount of health and strength; for a bedridden man can do nothing. And just so in regard of any good spiritual work. It cannot be done except by those who have in the first instance received from God, through the great Sacrifice for sin, life, and light, and health. “Who hath first given to the Lord, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?”²

¹ St. John i. 12.

² Rom. xi. 35.

“And also daily endeavour ourselves” (a reflexive verb, “to endeavour oneself,”¹ now no longer in use, and therefore not to be read, as some clergy do read it, with an emphasis upon *ourselves*, as if it were intended to express some obligation upon *us* to copy Christ’s life) “to follow the blessed steps of his most holy life.” The general meaning is, to imitate Christ’s life; but we must not fail to observe the special aspect under which the imitation is here presented to us. The Epistle and Gospel are so contrived as beautifully to dovetail into one another, inasmuch as the Epistle ends, “Ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls,”² and the Gospel begins, “Jesus said, I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.”³ The phrase “following the steps of his most holy life” has reference to the Eastern custom (different from our own) of the shepherd going before the sheep with his crook in his hand, and the sheep following him, planting their feet upon his foot-tracks, as our Lord says, “When he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.”⁴ Do we recognise His voice in Providence, in His Word, in the depths of our consciences? Have we felt that we personally and individually, and not merely in the mass, are addressed by Him,—that we are known and called “by name”? And are we following Him, or endeavouring to do so, studying how we may set our feet upon the tracks which He has left behind Him all along the sands of human life?

¹ This reflexive verb appears again in the seventh Answer in the “Form and Manner of Making Deacons;” “*I will endeavour myself*, the Lord being my helper.”

² 1 Pet. ii. 25.

³ St. John x. 11.

⁴ St. John x. 4.

Then may we hope that, in the dark hour when flesh and heart faileth,¹ He will be our guiding Shepherd still, will feed us in the green pastures of Paradise, and lead us forth beside the waters of comfort, will fulfil to us the gracious promise,—“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.”²

¹ See Psalm lxxiii. 26.

² Psalm xxiii. 2, 4.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Almighty God, who shewest to them that be in error the light of thy truth, to the intent that they may return into the way of righteousness; Grant unto all them that are admitted into the fellowship of Christ's Religion, that they may eschew those things that are contrary to their profession, and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same; through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Deus, qui errantibus, ut in viam possint redire iustitiae, veritatis tuae lumen ostendis: da cunctis qui Christiana professione censentur, et illa respuere quae huic inimica sunt nomini, et ea quae sunt apta sectari. Per Dominum.—*Miss. Sar.*; and see *Gel. Sac.* [Mur. i. 301], and *Greg. Sac.* [Menard] p. 89.

THIS Collect is of great antiquity. It may be traced up to the earliest of the Sacramentaries, that of Leo the Great. Gelasius left it untouched; but Gregory added a single word to it, which developes the meaning rather more fully. As it stands in Leo's Sacramentary, the words are, "to the intent that they may return into the way." Gregory inserted the words "of righteousness," to indicate clearly what way was meant. We have already seen that in many of the Collects which they have translated, our Reformers acted upon the same principle of introducing a word or two to unfold the sense. This very ancient prayer places us in imagination in the midst of a primitive state of things, which has long since passed away. Tertullian, writing as early as the close of the second century, tells us that Easter, and the whole of the period from Easter to Pentecost, was in the early Church

one of the great seasons for the administration of Baptism.¹ Catechumens, having been prepared by careful instruction during the forty days of Lent, received the Sacrament on Easter Even or during Easter tide, there being doubtless in the choice of the season an intended reference to the words of St. Paul, "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God."² Part of the ritual of Baptism in those days consisted in the investing of the baptized person in a white linen dress,³ the colour symbolizing the righteousness wherewith by his engrafting into Christ he was endued, while the material, being that in which the dead were wrapped, signified that those who are "baptized into Jesus Christ" are "baptized into his death."⁴ If the Baptism took place on Easter Eve, this dress was worn till the first Sunday after Easter, when it was exchanged for ordinary attire, and laid up in the

¹ *De Baptismo*, c. 19 (p. 232a). See Bingham for this reference, and for the explanation of the passage in Tertullian; "Ant. of Christian Church," Book xi. chap. vi. § 7.

² Col. ii. 12.

³ This dress was called in Latin "alba," and in Greek *λαμπρά* or *λευκή ἐσθῆς*, or *ἐμφωτίον*. . . . "Constantine the Great, dying shortly after his baptism, was buried μετ' αὐτῶν τῶν ἐμφωτίων, in the garments which he had then worn."—Smith and Cheetham's "Dict. of Christian Antiquities," Art. BAPTISM, § 61. In the first Prayer Book of Edward VI. (1549) the white vesture ("commonly called the crisome") was directed to be put upon the baptized infant immediately after its baptism, and before the anointing. The form of words to be used by the minister in putting it on the child was as follows:—

"Take this white vesture for a token of the innocencie, whiche by God's grace in this holy sacramente of Baptisme, is geven unto the; & for a signe wherby thou art admonished, so long as thou lyvest, to geve thy selfe to innocencie of living, that after this transitorye lyfe, thou mayst be partaker of the lyfe everlasting. Amen."

Then followed the anointing of the child upon the head, and then (what we still retain) the signing with the cross, and reception "into the congregation of Christ's flock."—See Edward VIth's "Two Books of Common Prayer," p. 334. [Oxford, 1838.]

⁴ Rom. vi. 3.

church to be a witness against the newly-baptized in case of his breaking the Baptismal vow. And not unfrequently in case of death it was used as a shroud to wrap the body in,—an usage which was adopted at the death of Constantine. In endeavouring, then, to understand the Collect before us, we are to imagine that just previously to the Easter Festival we had seen a large group of catechumens brought to the font and there solemnly “admitted” by Baptism “into the fellowship of Christ’s Religion,” and then clothed in “fine linen” robes, “white and clean,” in which robes they appeared in public during the ensuing week, and which were afterwards kept as evidence against them, in case of their doing anything unworthy of their Christian profession. And the prayer, offered for them when these white robes had been discontinued for a fortnight, and the first impressions of their regeneration by water and the Spirit were beginning to lose their freshness, was that they might do nothing hereafter which those robes should seem to reprove, and that their lives might be of a piece with the colour of the robes, holy, harmless, undefiled,—a daily dying unto sin, and living unto righteousness.

“Almighty God, who shewest to them that be in error the light of thy truth, to the intent that they may return into the way of righteousness.” It should be clearly understood that the “error” here is not that of Christians untrue to their profession, but of the unevangelized world, or of those who, having received the faith, have apostatized from it,—the speculative error of avowed unbelief or misbelief, combined, as it so often is, with the practical error of gross vice and immorality. Unless this is heeded, the petition of the Collect will not seem to hang together with its opening clause. The imagery of

the clause is drawn from the circumstances of a belated traveller, overtaken by night as he is making his way over a common, where there are morasses and pitfalls, and many tracks crossing one another, and only the faint light of a few stars above. Such an one needs the sunlight to show him where the right path lies,—the path to the city where he dwells. The Jew, the Mahometan, the heathen, the heretic, have indeed the moral sense and the religious instinct to guide them; but this moral sense and this religious instinct need a light from heaven—the light of Revelation—in order to discern the narrow way which leadeth unto life,—and without such light they are “not able”¹ to “return into the way of righteousness.” In the great majority of those who lack this light, the moral sense is either deadened or depraved, and the religious instinct debased, so that in heathen society gross forms of immorality are found side by side with idolatry and superstition. But upon these catechumens, recently “admitted into the fellowship of Christ’s Religion,” Christ the light hath shined; and they, being sincere in their desire to escape out of the darkness, have come to the light; Christ the way has been manifested to them, and they have planted their feet upon the way. Note here what a good end Gregory’s addition to the Collect serves; “way of righteousness” balances “light of truth” much better than mere “way” would have done. “The light of truth” might be supposed to be merely a speculative light, merely the shewing people on the part of God what they should believe; but the end of Revelation is practical not speculative; the truth which God “shews,” is a truth which bears upon and influences man’s conduct and eternal destiny; it

¹ In the original Latin of the Collect the “may” of our translation is “may be able to”—“ut in viam possint redire iustitiæ.”

shines upon him for the purpose of guiding him into the narrow "way of righteousness," of obedience, of holiness, of sanctification.—But how, it may be asked, can a converted Jew or Mahometan or Pagan be said to "*return* into the way of righteousness?" Was he in it before he was converted? Can a man be said to "return" to a way, from which he has never strayed? The answer is, first, that all men—the entire human race—fell in Adam; and that Adam *was* in "the way of righteousness" before his fall,—knew what the light of God's countenance was, and what communion with God was, and what was the pleasantness and peace which are to be found in obedience. Secondly, that in every man born into the world there is not only a moral sense and a religious instinct, which are a real witness for God in the natural heart, but also that to every man a revelation is made of God's eternal power and Godhead, by means of the works of nature, and that St. Paul recognises the fact that certain of the heathen, with only this measure of divine assistance, did "by nature the things contained in the law."¹ Since then, the heathen have a certain law within them, and a certain revelation from without, it may properly be said of them when, after violating this law, and refusing to be guided by this revelation, they are brought by the better revelation of the Gospel to acknowledge their error and come out of it, that they "*return* into the way of righteousness." We may take the opportunity of observing that there are two contrary errors on the subject of the spiritual condition of the heathen, against which, if we will guide ourselves by holy Scripture, we must be on our guard; one, the error of supposing them to have no law and to be under no revelation, in which case their idolatries and immoralities would not be "without excuse," as St. Paul

¹ Rom. ii. 14.

expressly says that they are¹ (for if God had not showed unto them in His works what may be known of Him, idolatry surely *would* have an excuse); the other, the error of underrating the absolute necessity of the revelation made in the *Word* of God, in order to the attainment of any true peace, any spirituality of mind, any holiness of heart and life. If we are to find our way over a common at night, starlight is better than no light at all, and the short distance to which we can see with such a light is better than if we were actually blind. But, nevertheless, we should feel that sunlight, and a strong open eye capable of making use of it, are essential to our safety, to our comfort, and, if not actually to our finding our way, yet at all events to our walking in it securely and with unfaltering step.

“Grant unto all them that are admitted into the fellowship of Christ’s Religion.” The translators have imported a new idea into the Collect with the word “fellowship.” The literal translation of the Latin of this clause is, “Grant unto all those who are enrolled as Christians by profession,” or, as the same idea is phrased in the “Prayer for all conditions of men,” “all who profess and call themselves Christians.” “Admission into fellowship” brings with it a new idea, foreign to the point of the Collect, but very valuable and very edifying. The Christian Church, into which we are admitted by Baptism, is “the body of Christ,”² every member of which is knit together in living union with every other member. To use the language of the Apostles’ Creed, the Church is the Communion of Saints, in which saints separated by long tracts of time and space, nay and by death, have a real and living intercourse with one another, are moved by one Spirit, animated by one hope, serve one Lord,

¹ See Rom. i. 19, 20.

² See Eph. i. 22, 23; and Col. i. 24.

confess one faith, are baptized into one body, look up to one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in them all.¹ They have fellowship, too, with the angels; for the heavenly Jerusalem, into which their Baptism has brought them, comprises, as the Epistle to Hebrews teaches us, “an innumerable company of angels.”² And, rising higher still, we say that “truly their fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ,”³ that being engrafted into Christ, they “are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones,”⁴ and that, He being one with His Father in the unity of the Godhead, and being also by His indwelling Spirit the fountain to them of spiritual life, they are even made partakers of the divine nature.⁵ Thus the circle, into which they are admitted at Baptism, embraces God, Christ, holy angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, as well as saints on earth who are absent from them in the flesh, and such as have lived before, and will live after, them. And it is interesting to observe that this mention of admission into Christian fellowship was introduced into the old Collect by the same divines who inserted words to the same effect in the Baptismal Office. The signing with the cross indeed was a usual ceremony at Baptism, and directions for it are found in many ancient rituals. But the words, with which the signature of the cross is administered among ourselves, were new, and made their first appearance in the Second Prayer Book of Edward VI., A.D. 1552;—“We receive this child into the congregation of Christ’s flock.” Hitherto there had been no recognition in the Baptismal Office of the baptized being brought by Baptism into fellowship with the whole body of the faithful.

¹ See Eph. iv. 4, 5, 6.

² Heb. xii. 22.

³ 1 John i. 3.

⁴ Eph. v. 30.

⁵ See 2 Pet. i. 4.

“That they may eschew those things that are contrary to their profession,” literally, “that they may reject with loathing those things that are contrary to this name,”—the name of Christians. To *eschew* is a good old word, which we trust will not vanish out of our language altogether, though Johnson says it was almost obsolete in his day. Possibly it is connected with the much commoner word, which denotes the scaring of birds from corn or fruit,—to *shoo* them away. Its meaning is, not merely to avoid, but to chase away—repel. And the original word *respuere* (to spit out of the mouth) shows that this repelling is to be with aversion and loathing. We are to treat things contrary to our Christian profession, as the Lord says to the Laodicean Church that He will treat the lukewarm;—“So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.”¹ It is a feature of the Christian character, not merely to avoid evil, but to loathe it. “*Abhor* that which is evil,”² says the Apostle. And one of the features of the wicked man, as portrayed by the Psalmist, is that “he *abhorreth* not evil.”³ Now, as the fellowship of Christ’s Religion has been mentioned just before, and as we here ask grace for those admitted to this fellowship to “eschew those things that are contrary to their profession,” we may well understand the sin of schism as being one of the many contrary things. If we were admitted into fellowship with Christ at our Baptism, and brought as it were within the folds of His robe, it is contrary to our profession to rend that seamless vest, whether by formally separating from that branch of the Church which is planted among us, or by indulging party spirit, and setting up different factions and schools within this communion. “From all false doctrine, heresy, and schism, Good Lord, deliver us.”—But

¹ Rev. iii. 16.

² Rom. xii. 9.

³ Ps. xxxvi. 4.

an observation may profitably be made on the original of this clause, "contrary"—not to their profession, but—"to *this name*,—" "contrary to *this name*." "The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch."¹ It is probable that this was a name not assumed by themselves, but given them by the heathen, because we do not find that the sacred writers use this name in addressing, or speaking of, their brethren.² But the name, though perhaps originally given as a reproach, was accepted with joy and pride by those to whom it was given, as indicating their connexion with Him who was anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power,³ and who left us an example that we should follow His steps.⁴ And as "he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth,"⁵ they were reminded by it, whenever it was hurled against them as a taunt, that this was one of the mottoes inscribed on God's seal, wherewith they had been sealed in their Baptism; "Let every one that *nameth the name of Christ* depart from iniquity."⁶

"And follow all such things' as are agreeable to the same." The Baptismal vow is negative in its first branch; "First, that I should renounce the devil, and all his works, the pomps and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh." But *only* in its first branch. The two other sections of the vow are positive, that we should "believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith," and, in the strength of that faith, should "keep God's

¹ Acts xi. 26.

² "I lean to the opinion that this name was not assumed by the Christians themselves, but given them by the heathen, to denote followers of a sect, of which Christ was the Head. We do not find that the sacred writers use this name in addressing or speaking of the brethren."—Bishop Kaye's "Account of the External Government and Discipline of the Church during the three first Centuries." P. 21, *note g*. [London: 1855.]

³ See Acts x. 38.

⁴ See 1 Pet. ii. 21.

⁵ 1 Pet. ii. 22.

⁶ 2 Tim. ii. 19.

holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of our life." Mere abstinence from wrong-doing, which so many regard in themselves, and speak of in others, with such tones of complacency, is not a sufficient evidence of our faith, without the diligent maintenance of good works ; for faith is an essentially operative principle ; it "worketh by love,"¹ and without works declares itself to be dead.² And observe the "all," which our translators have inserted, and which is highly significant, "*all* such things as are agreeable to the same." There must be no flinching from any duty, to which God really calls us in His word or by His providence, no attempt to compound by strictness in one particular for laxity in another, no cultivation of opposite graces at the expense of one another, of love for instance at the expense of truth, or of truth at the expense of love ; but a care to cultivate, in our character and conduct, "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise."³

But now let us turn and review this petition summarily. What a large one it is ! how immensely comprehensive ! What a moral revolution would be brought about in the society all around us, if God were to grant to all the baptized to eschew those things that are contrary to their profession, and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same ! This is in fact asking that men may become angels, and earth heaven. Such a prayer will never be fully answered. Christ and His apostles do not lead us to expect that it will. Tares will grow up side by side with the good seed in the

¹ Gal. v. 6.² James ii. 20.³ Philip. iv. 8.

harvest field of the Church,¹ even to the time of the final harvest, when the angel reapers shall gather up the tares, and sever them once for all from the wheat.² But *God's permission of evil, God's prediction of evil, is no rule for our prayers.* It may be allowed to subsist, and its subsistence may be clearly foretold, but we are to pray against it and strive against it, both in ourselves and in the society around us, none the less for its allowed and predicted continuance. The rule for our prayers is the Divine prayer, which the Lord has put into our mouth as a model, whereon to frame our petitions. And this model teaches us to pray without reservation or modification that God's name may be hallowed, and His kingdom come, and His will be done, as in heaven so also upon the earth; in other words we are to pray that reverence, loyalty, obedience towards God, may be as universally exhibited among fallen men as they are among unfallen angels. And the more fervent are the Church's prayers, and the more sincere her efforts towards this glorious end, the more nearly will she approximate towards it. Prayer and effort combined, if they achieve not all at which they aim, will yet contribute materially towards it, so that not one single faithful prayer and effort shall be lost or fall to the ground. And remember we that the power of Him, with whom we have to do, not only over circumstances, but over the unruly wills and affections of sinful men, is unlimited. He is "able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think,"³ and from Him "all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed."⁴

¹ See St. Matt. xiii. 26.

² See St. Matt. xiii. 41.

³ Eph. iii. 20.

⁴ Second Collect at Evening Prayer.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

O Almighty God, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men; Grant unto thy people, that they may love the thing which thou commandest, and desire that which thou dost promise; that so, among the sundry and manifold changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed, where true joys are to be found; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Deus, qui fidelium mentes unius efficis voluntatis; da populis tuis id amare quod praecipis, id desiderare quod promittis; ut inter mundanas varietates ibi nostra fixa sint corda ubi vera sunt gaudia. Per Dominum.¹—*Gel. Sac.*—*Miss. Sar.* [The first clause altered in 1661.]

IN all perfect specimens of the Collect form of prayer, the doctrine recited, or the fact rehearsed, immediately after the invocation, is made the basis or groundwork of the petition. The petition is built upon the doctrine, as a house upon its foundation. In the present instance, the old foundation of the prayer has been removed, and a new one substituted, while the superstructure remains exactly what it was. This alteration, rather a hazardous one to venture upon, was made at the last review in 1661. Hitherto the first clause of the Collect had run thus; "Almighty God, who dost make the minds of all faithful men to be of one will," and this was the form in which

¹ In *Gel. Sac.*, as given by Muratori [tom. i. col. 585], the collect ends with the single word "Per."

the prayer came down to the original translators from the Sacramentary of Gelasius through the Missal of Sarum. There is a real and profound connexion between this clause and the petition. The thought that couples the two is this. Unity of mind and heart among Christians is to be obtained, not by any uniformity of discipline and worship, but by an action of the Holy Spirit upon the will and affections of all, leading them all to love one thing,—what God commands,—and to desire one thing,—that which He promises,—and thus drawing the hearts of all in the same direction. If separate particles of steel are lying about on a table confusedly without any connexion or order, the way to bring them together is to introduce a powerful magnet among them. Then, being all attracted to the same point, they spring up and cleave to the magnet. It is by making men loyal to His will, and to the hope of glory which He holds out to them, that God joins them together in the same mind and in the same judgment. His precept and His promise are the magnetic power, which draws them into union with one another, and the cement which holds them there. A most instructive connexion surely between the doctrine and the prayer founded upon it, but perhaps one which was not sufficiently obvious, which was too far-fetched, and does not strike the mind on the surface. And accordingly the old foundation was swept away, and this new one—the alliance of which with the petition is much more immediately apparent—was substituted,—“who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men.” These words balance very beautifully with the two clauses of the petition, “the unruly wills” corresponding to the love of that which God commands, and “the unruly affections” to the desire of that which He promises.

Whoever may have originated the clause (it does not appear to have been Bishop Cosin), he seems to have had a very skilful hand, and quite to have imbibed the spirit of the ancient Collects.

“Almighty God, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections.” How does God order (that is, control and govern) the wills of men? This is a point on which it behoves us to be clear thinkers, lest we fall into dangerous error. Of course He may do so by overruling what they choose to do, however wicked it may be, and however much done in defiance of Himself, to His own ends. He may make the act of Joseph’s brethren in selling him into Egypt minister to the preservation of Jacob’s family;¹ He may make the act of the Jews in crucifying Christ instrumental in the salvation of the world.² But in these and similar instances God’s power is manifested rather over the result than over the process by which the result is arrived at; He orders rather the event than the will which gives birth to the event. And it is clear from the petition of the Collect that this is not what is *principally* intended. It is a power of controlling or modifying the human will itself, and not merely of controlling or modifying its effects, which is here referred to. Then, how does God order the unruly will from within, and bring it into subjection unto Himself, or, in other words, into conformity with His own will? Not by mechanical compulsion, inasmuch as men are moral agents; and moral agents would cease to be moral agents, if they were mechanically compelled to take a certain course. Planets are obliged, by an adjustment of the centrifugal and centripetal forces, to travel in their orbits;

¹ Gen. xlv. 5.

² See Acts ii. 23.

but no similar obligation is laid upon men to refuse the evil and to choose the good. How then does God order the unruly will? If it be not by mechanical, is it by moral, compulsion? Let us understand what moral compulsion means. It is a case of moral compulsion, when a man, for whatever reasons, does not dare to do something which he strongly desires to do. The phenomenon of people being obliged, by sheer dread of the consequences, either to do something which they shrink from, or to refrain from doing what they earnestly wish, is familiar to us. An intemperate man is often brought to abstain, if thoroughly persuaded that abstinence is necessary to save his life. It costs him a severe struggle to lay so much restraint upon himself; but under the pressure of fear he submits to the restraint.' Balaam earnestly wished to curse Israel; but he dreaded so much the consequences of delivering a message, other than that which God had put into his mouth, that he could not frame his lips to utter the curse.¹ His will was carried by fear. I say *carried*, not *won*. For a will held in check by fear, as a horse is held in check by bit and bridle, but recalcitrating all the time, cannot be said to be *won*. A moral compulsion is not a *winning*, though it may be rightly called an *ordering*, of the will. There can be no winning of the will, unless the will moves cheerfully, and freely, and lovingly towards the thing which is willed. How then does God *win* the will, as distinct from *carrying* it? We have seen that He *carries* it by bringing to bear upon it the affection of fear. He *wins* it, on the other hand, by sending a strong influence upon the affections of desire, hope, and love, and stirring them up by His Holy Spirit. He strongly impresses us with the peace and pleasantness

¹ See Num. xxii. 38.

which are to be found in wisdom's ways.¹ He gives us a relish for spiritual, as distinct from earthly, pleasures, and kindles in us an aspiration after the crown of glory. When the loves and the desires, the affections and the hopes are set right, then the will moves spontaneously in the same direction, and the needle of the heart is true to the heavenly pole. For the affections are the motive powers which set the will in operation.—Here we see the vital connexion between the opening clause of the Collect, as it now stands, and the petition built upon it.

“Grant unto thy people, that they may love the thing which thou commandest,” or, in other words, “that their wills may be *won* unto thy precepts,” which cannot be, so long as they are merely brought to execute Thy commandments without loving them. They must be brought to perceive that these commandments are holy, just, and good, and are absolutely necessary to secure the happiness of moral creatures, and to obey them under this view of them. To comply with the precept, while feeling it to be a painful and irksome restraint, is a mere Balaam's obedience, which will avail nothing. And oh! how should it put us to shame to reflect that, before the force of evangelical motives was brought to bear upon the wills of men, there were found under the dispensation of the Law, the main characteristic of which was precept rather than promise, and whose terms were “Do this, and thou shalt live,”² Saints who held God's precepts in such esteem, that they broke forth towards them in accents of fervent love and longing, “O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day;”³ “I love thy commandments above gold;

¹ See Prov. iii. 17.

² See St. Luke x. 28, and Rom. x. 5, and Gal. iii. 12.

³ Ps. cxix. 97.

yea, above fine gold ;”¹ “The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver ;”² “The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold : sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.”³ Christians as we are, and in the enjoyment of such light and help as were never vouchsafed under the Old Covenant, can we say with truth that these are the sentiments with which *we* regard the Divine precepts ?

“And desire that which thou dost promise,” or, in other words, “Grant that their affections, which regulate their wills, may be set upon the hopes which God holds out in another world, the society of saints and angels, and the ravishing sight of the King in His beauty,⁴ of Christ as He is.” This clause is very necessary to the full development of the idea. For, while it is true that the Christian finds, even during this life, peace and pleasantness in wisdom’s ways, and experiences an inward satisfaction in keeping the commandments of God, he is still an expectant ; while his “conversation is” at present “in heaven,” he looks “for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change” his “vile body ;”⁵ and this hope is the very polestar of his mind. And a most searching question it is, to ask ourselves whether our desires are in such a state at present that we are able to relish spiritual joys. Carnally-minded Israelites loathed and spurned the manna, the bread which fell from heaven,⁶ a food as pure as the dew underneath which it lay, and “the taste of” which “was like wafers made with honey,”⁷ and longed and lusted for the fleshpots of Egypt, gross and highly-flavoured viands,

¹ Ps. cxix. 127.² Ps. cxix. 72.³ Ps. xix. 9, 10.⁴ See Isaiah xxxiii. 17.⁵ See Philip. iii. 20.⁶ See Num. xxi. 5.⁷ Exod. xvi. 31.

stimulating to the appetite and heating to the blood. Are there no carnally-minded Christians, to whom, because they have no taste for spiritual pleasures, heaven would be no heaven if they were placed there, who keenly appreciate the distinctions which the world has to offer, and the luxuries which money is the means of procuring, but have no heart for those joys which will abide and grow more vivid, when the lust and the fashion of this world have for ever passed away?¹

“That so, among the sundry and manifold changes of the world”—“sundry,” of various sorts; “manifold,” many in number. How changeful, how continually fluctuating, were the fortunes of all the leading Saints, both of the Old and New Testament, of Jacob, Joseph, David, Daniel, St. Peter, St. Paul! The first named of these, Jacob, was perhaps a man as much tried by reverses as any of those with whom God has ever had dealings of grace. And David was another, whose experience was similar. And in both of these men we note, towards the close of their career, the labouring under a sense of life’s burdens, combined with a sure hope and desire of that which God had promised. “Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been,”² said Jacob to Pharaoh; and afterwards on his deathbed, as if to console himself for a sad retrospect, he breaks off in the midst of his dying prophecy to say with failing breath, “I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord.”³ Like his grandfather Abraham, “he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”⁴ “O what great troubles and adversities hast thou shewed me,” cries David in the Psalms, “and yet didst thou turn and refresh me: yea, and broughtest me

¹ See 1 John ii. 17, and 1 Cor. vii. 31.

² Gen. xlvii. 9.

³ Gen. xlix. 18.

⁴ Heb. xi. 10.

from the deep of the earth again.”¹ But hear him on his deathbed, how he sighs after the things which God had promised, “Although my house be not so with God,” has not gone on prosperously and without reverses, as the morning light waxes, and the grass grows, continuously, “yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire.”² The everlasting covenant was all David’s “desire” in that season, as well as all his “salvation.” His heart and mind, touched by the magnetism of grace, were true to the polestar of the hope which God held out. Shall not this reprove us, who, with light so much brighter than his, have desires so much fainter for the joys above?

Finally, do not omit to observe the beautiful appropriateness of this clause to the Christian season for which the Collect is appointed. We are drawing near the Ascension Day, and *feel* that we are drawing near to it. We shall soon be called upon to pray that we may (in a spiritual sense) accompany our Lord in His journey to the realms above; that “like as we do believe” Him “to have ascended into the heavens, so we may also in heart and mind thither ascend, and with him continually dwell.” Here, then, is a first foretaste of the Ascension Collect. “Make our hearts true to Thy precepts, to Thy promises, O God. Make our happiness more and more independent of circumstances, which are ever shifting and varying like the wind. And thus do away with everything within us which might resist the attraction of a crucified, risen, and ascended Saviour, and draw us after Him, and unto Him, ‘with cords of a man, with bands of love.’”³

¹ Ps. lxxi. 18, P.B.V.

² 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

³ See Hosea xi. 4.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

○ Lord, from whom all good things do come; Grant to us thy humble servants, that by thy holy inspiration we may think those things that be good, and by thy merciful guiding may perform the same; through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Deus, a quo cuncta bona procedunt, largire supplicibus tuis, ut cogitemus, te inspirante, quae recta sunt, et te gubernante eadem faciamus. Per Dominum.¹—*Gel. Sac.*—*Miss. Sar.*

THIS Collect may be traced up through the Missal of Sarum to the Sacramentary of Gelasius, who was raised to the Papal chair in 492 A.D. The only deviations from the original made by the translators in 1549 are—first, the addition of two adjectives, God's "inspiration" being called "holy," and His "guiding" "merciful." If these epithets cannot be said to add much to the sense of the Collect, they at least do something for its sound. Great and commendable pains were taken by the compilers of our Prayer Book to make the prayers rhythmical to the ear, under the view, possibly, that rhythm is not merely an ornament of style, but also an assistance to the memory. Besides these additions, the translators substituted the word "good" for "right" in the petition of the Collect. The Latin has, "Grant that by thy inspiration we may think those things that be *right*." The English is, "that

¹ *Gel. Sac.*, as given by Mur. [tom. i. col. 585], omits the words "tuis" and "Dominum."

by thy holy inspiration we may think those things that be *good*." "Good" has an advantage over right in this respect, that it establishes an instantaneous connexion between the petition of the Collect and the doctrine that "all good things come from God," on which it is based. But, on the other hand, there is some forfeiture of idea in the alteration. "Good" is a much more comprehensive term than "right." Things morally "good" are "right." But the word "good" applies as well to God's *natural* blessings, health, strength, food, raiment, success, as to His *spiritual* blessings, the grace to discern what is His will, and the power to do it. And there is every reason to think that natural blessings, though not as high in the scale of God's gifts as spiritual, were specially in the contemplation of the original framers of the prayer.

"O Lord, from whom all good things do come." The Fifth Sunday after Easter is sometimes called Rogation Sunday, as being the commencement of the week in which the Rogation days fall, and which is characterized by them. The Rogation days (or days of asking) are said to have been instituted by Mamertus,¹ Bishop of Vienne in France,

¹ Or Mamercus (for the name is given in both forms). Solemn supplications, or Rogations, existed before the time of Mamertus; but he was the first who affixed them to the three days immediately before Ascension Day. One chief object of these Rogations, Sidonius Apollinaris tells us, was "*ut aut imbres aut serenitatem deprecarentur*." See the passage of Sidonius cited by Bingham in a note to "*Ant. of Christian Church*, Book xxi. ii. 8:—"The Rogation days of Mamertus were received in the English Church at an early period, as the Council of Cloveshoo appointed that these three days should be kept holy, *after the manner of former times*."—Palmer's "*Origines*," vol. i. p. 270. [Oxford, 1839.] The Council of Cloveshoo (a place which can now only be conjecturally identified) was held in 747, under Archbishop Cuthbert, Ethelbald king of Mercia presiding. See a reference to another of its acts on p. 39 of this Volume.

about the middle of the fifth century. They were instituted, it is said, in view of certain calamities, earthquake and fire, which had occurred in that district, and a recurrence of which was to be deprecated by litanies, or solemn supplications to God, said or sung in procession. But, independently of this local reason for the institution, the Fifth Sunday after Easter had, probably before the time of Mamertus, been considered a suitable season, as falling in the full burst of spring, for praising God for the produce of the earth, and imploring Him to preserve it to man's use. In short, it was regarded as a sort of harvest festival, only celebrated, not at the time of the harvest, but in anticipation of it—a season at which Christians reminded themselves how precarious was the increase, the tokens of which they saw all around them, how easily blight, or insects, or two or three days of drought or wet at a critical period, might utterly ruin what at present promised so well, and in this uncertainty betook themselves to Him, “from whom all good things do come,” to bring the fruit to perfection, ripening the blade into the ear, and the ear into the full corn, so that there might be not promise only, but a joyful ingathering at the appointed time. In the Reformed Church it was thought well to preserve these Rogation Days. Accordingly a homily, in four parts, was appointed for this week, one part for each of the three Rogation Days, and a fourth to be read in the course of the perambulation which was made round the bounds of parishes during this week, and which served to keep up the memory of the bounds, and so to prevent territorial disputes. These perambulations may be regarded as a relic of the ancient litanies of Mamertus, which were to be sung in procession. They are the only processions, besides those in the Marriage and Burial Services, which

have been retained by the Reformed Church. The subject of the homily, as given in its heading, is "That all good things cometh from God." The first part speaks of natural "good things;" the second of the "good things" of fortune and circumstance; the third of spiritual "good things," as coming from God; while the fourth part, which was to be delivered on the day of perambulation, distinctly recognises the fact that the principal object of the assembling together is "to laud and thank Almighty God for his great benefits, by beholding the fields replenished with all manner of fruit, and to make our humble suits in prayers to his fatherly providence, to conserve the same fruits in sending us seasonable weather." The first clause of the Collect then, "from whom all good things do come," must be understood to glance at the vernal produce of the earth, the leaf, bud, and blossom which we see around us on all sides in the opening spring, as being the result of God's working in the realm of Nature. But because this reference was not sufficiently explicit, the Royal Commissioners, appointed to revise the Book of Common Prayer in the reign of William the Third, prepared a new Collect¹ for Rogation Sunday, expressly asking for seasonable weather that we may gather in the fruits of the earth, and chose as the Gospel that passage of the Sermon on the Mount, in which our Saviour bids us take no thought for our life,

¹ This Collect, which may be seen in Procter on "The Book of Common Prayer" (Cambridge 1855), Appendix ii. p. 249, runs thus:—"Almighty God, who hast blessed the earth that it should be fruitful, and bring forth every thing that is necessary for the life of man, and hast commanded us to work with quietness and eat our own bread; Bless us in all our labours, and grant us such seasonable weather that we may gather in the fruits of the earth, and ever rejoice in thy goodness, to the praise of thy holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord." The portion of Scripture appointed for the Epistle was Deut. xxviii. 1-9, and the Gospel was St. Matt. vi. 25, to the end.

what we shall eat or what we shall drink, but seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. The scheme of revision fell through, from the strong feeling entertained against it in the Lower House of Convocation. It may be permitted to regret that this part of it was not carried into effect.

“Grant to us, thy humble servants, that by thy holy inspiration we may think those things that be good.” There is an undercurrent of reference here, quite missed by those who do not bear in mind the ancient practice of asking at this season of the year for a plentiful harvest in the autumn. The thinking of right thoughts, the entertaining of holy desires, the formation of good counsels or resolutions, these things are the *spring produce* of the moral soil, the “tender blade” put forth by God’s working in the heart. But the right thought has yet to develop itself into performance, the holy desire and good counsel have to *ripen* into the just work, according to that word of exhortation in reference to almsdeeds, “Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have.”¹ There must be a moral harvest, as well as the first appearance of vegetation in the soil of the heart. There is an entirely analogous passage in the Marriage Service, where the implied reference is to the increase of the human race which is by marriage; “Bless these thy servants, and sow the seed of eternal life in their hearts.” The seed of eternal life, “incorruptible seed,” is “the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever.”² We pray that this may be sown in the hearts of the married persons,—sown, so as in the first instance to germinate in good desires and right thoughts. But these good desires and

¹ 2 Cor. viii. 11.² 1 Pet. i. 23.

right thoughts are of no avail, if they terminate upon themselves, if they are not brought to good effect. Therefore we go on to pray, "that whatever in thy holy word they shall profitably learn, they may in deed fulfil the same."—We must not pass away from this clause without observing on the word "*inspiration*," which is prayed for here, as also in that noble Collect which stands at the beginning of the Communion Service. There is, or rather there was, an inspiration which is a *gift*, a supernatural endowment of the Holy Spirit, just as, in the infancy of the Christian Church, there was also a faith, which was a gift, a full persuasion on the mind of a believer that he could work a certain miracle. This inspiration exists no more, or does not exist in a miraculous form, though its natural basis is perhaps to be found in what is called genius. But there is also an inspiration, needed nowadays, and granted nowadays as much as ever, the inspiration which is a *grace*, that inbreathing of the blessed Spirit which is the source of every *right* thought, and which cleanses the *wrong* thoughts, so as to qualify the soul for the perfect love and worthy magnification of God.

"And by thy merciful guiding may perform the same." There are in every moral action two things to be considered, the design and the execution. A right action, therefore, may be compared to a work of art. It is not enough that the painter or sculptor should conceive the idea of it; he must know also how to throw the idea on the canvas or the marble; when he sets to work, he must guide his hands with dexterity. We need "*guidance*" from God, when we come to put a right thought into execution, as well as "*inspiration*" from God, in order that we may conceive a right thought. As a

single example, take some large design of Christian benevolence. How great caution, how much prudence, forethought, judgment, is required in giving effect to such a design! How easily may an ill-considered, ill-digested attempt to do good be productive of harm—nay, tend to create the very misery which we seek to relieve! The original impulse, therefore, is not the only thing needed; there must be subsequent guidance also. And how certain is it that He who made the human hand, the symbol and representative of work, and endowed it with all its wonderful power of adapting itself both to the fine and mechanical arts, and to all the uses of life, will grant us guidance, if we seek it, in giving effect to those right thoughts, which He Himself by His Spirit has put into our minds!

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE ASCENSION DAY.

Grant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that like as we do believe thy only-begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ to have ascended into the heavens; so we may also in heart and mind thither ascend, and with him continually dwell, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

Concede, quaesumus, omnipotens Deus, ut qui hodierna die Unigenitum tuum redemptorem nostrum ad coelos ascendisse credimus, ipsi quoque mente in coelestibus habitemus. Per eundem.—*Greg. Sac.—Miss. Sar.*

THIS Collect is a translation of that which is found in the Missal of Sarum, and which is traced back to the Sacramentary of Gregory. Cranmer, in translating it, has added a few happy touches, which shall be noticed as we go along. But even Gregory cannot be called the original author of the Collect. He derived the leading thoughts of it from the Sacramentary of Gelasius,¹ and embodied them in language of his own. Thus our Reformers, in

¹ The Gelasian Collect, expressing much the same ideas, is as follows [*Mur. tom. i. 588*]:—

Præsta, quaesumus, omnipotens Pater, ut nostræ mentis intentio quò solemnitatis hodiernæ gloriosus Auctor ingressus est, semper intendat, et quò fide pergit, conversatione perveniat. Per.

Grant, we beseech thee, Almighty Father, that in the intention of our mind we may ever tend thither, where the glorious Author of to-day's festival hath entered in, and that to the place whither we reach forward by faith, we may come by our [holy] conversation. Through.

remodelling several of the ancient Collects, only acted upon precedents set them in the Sacramentaries themselves.

“Grant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that like as we do *believe* thy only-begotten Son to have ascended.” Gelasius’s Collect also had a mention of reaching forth by faith to heaven, and ultimately arriving there by a holy conversation. No doubt what suggested our *faith* in the Ascension, was the *sight* which the holy Apostles enjoyed of this great mystery. He “*manifestly appeared* to all his Apostles” (as our Proper Preface has it) “and *in their sight* ascended up into heaven.” They reached forth *by sight* to heaven,—“*looked stedfastly toward heaven*, as he went up.”¹ The reason of ocular demonstration having been granted to the Apostles is thus given by Bishop Pearson: “They did not see him when he rose, but they saw him when he ascended; because an eye-witness was not necessary unto the act of his resurrection, but it was necessary unto the act of his ascension.” The circumstance of Christ being seen, touched, discoursed with after His death, sufficed to show that He was risen again; but “being”—[since] “the Apostles were not to see our Saviour in heaven,—being the session was not to be visible to them on earth, therefore it was necessary that they should be eye-witnesses of the act, who were not with the same eyes to behold the effect.” Ours it is to believe firmly in what the Apostles on that great occasion saw, and thus to inherit the blessing pronounced by our Lord upon those “that have not seen, and yet have believed.”² And if we are disposed to estimate unduly the privilege of ocular demonstration, which the Apostles enjoyed, let us bear

¹ Acts i. 10.

² See St. John xx. 29.

in mind that, apart from the evidence which might be furnished to the world and the Church thereby, the mere witnessing of this or any other act of our Blessed Lord's would have been of no avail to us whatever. Had one of the lower animals been present at our Lord's Ascension, it would have seen the transaction; the image of the ascending Saviour would have been for a moment painted on its retina; but we cannot think that such an impression as an animal might receive would be of the smallest spiritual avail. The only sight which could avail a reasonable creature would be a sight in which the reason should bear a share—*the discernment of the meaning of the fact*—of its place in the work of our salvation, and its bearing on our spiritual welfare. Is not that intelligent discernment quite as open to us as it was to the Apostles?

"To have ascended into *the heavens*,"—plural. But in the Proper Preface it is; "He in their sight ascended up into *heaven*,"—singular. So in the Lord's Prayer, though the difference of number is not represented in our translation, we have; "Our Father, which art in *the heavens*" (plural), and, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in *heaven* (singular).¹ By *the heavens* are meant the lower heavens, the heaven in which birds flit and clouds float, the heaven in which planets roll along their orbits. We read of St. Paul's having been "caught up to the third heaven,"² so that Scripture recognises more heavens than one. And of these lower heavens we are expressly told that Christ ascended through them and above them. "We have a great high priest, that is passed" (not "into," as it is in our English translation, but) "through *the heavens*."³ And again; "separate from sinners, and made

¹ St. Matt. vi. 9, 10; St. Luke xi. 2.

² 2 Cor. xii. 2.

³ Heb. iv. 14.

higher than *the heavens*.”¹ And again; “he that descended is the same also that ascended up far above *all heavens*.”² And it should be observed that the translator of this Collect has not given the preposition here with entire accuracy. The Latin Collect recites our belief that Christ ascended (not “into,” but) *to* the heavens. *Heaven*, the singular, signifies the highest heaven, the Presence-chamber of the Divine Majesty, the throne,—nay, the very bosom of God; according to that word of the Prophet’s, “The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool,”³ and of the Apostle’s, Christ is “entered into heaven itself, now to appear” (a peculiar word⁴ — to appear as a counsel does, to represent before a court) “in the presence of God for us.”⁵ The Lord Jesus has passed into a higher heaven than that which is tenanted by angels, a heaven to which angels address their worship, as it is said; “Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.”

“That like as we do believe,” etc. etc., “so we may also in heart and mind thither ascend.” This is the fruit which (and which alone) will satisfactorily prove our belief in the Ascension to be a genuine one. Genuine belief will be followed by corresponding practice. And what, in this case, is corresponding practice? An ascension with Christ in heart and mind,—“so we may also in heart and mind

¹ Heb. vii. 26.

² Eph. iv. 10.

³ Isaiah lxvi. 1.

⁴ *νῦν ἐμφανισθῆναι τῷ προσώπῳ τοῦ Θεοῦ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν*. The force assigned above to the verb *ἐμφανίζω* is one which it has when followed by the prepositions *ὑπὲρ* and *κατὰ*. *Ἐμφανίζειν ὑπὲρ τινος*, is to appear as an advocate on behalf of a person (Heb. ix. 24). *Ἐμφανίζειν κατὰ τινος* is to appear in court against a person. See Acts xxiv. 1, xxv. 2, where it is used of the high priest, etc., lodging an accusation against St. Paul before the governors Felix and Festus.

⁵ Heb. ix. 24.

thither ascend." Cranmer introduced the word "heart," and most happily. The reason why our minds are so little in heaven is, that our hearts are so little there. The reason why our thoughts are so little occupied with Christ, is that our affections are so little set upon Him. One who is the object of earthly love is much thought of; the mind flies off to him whenever it is disengaged, simply because the heart is bound up in him. An image drawn from earthly love, however, though helpful as far as it goes, can only very imperfectly represent the union which subsists between His followers and the risen Saviour. It represents that union, not in its essence, but only in its effects upon the moral nature of man. What the union really consists in is the possession of the Holy Ghost by both parties — by Christ in all fulness, by the believer in a measure more or less stinted. It is not merely the union of the lover with the object of his love, but the union of the limbs with the head, of the branch with the root, of the streamlet with its source, of the ray with the sun. And on this account the order of things, as far as Christian experience is concerned, must be inverted. The spiritual Pentecost must precede the spiritual Ascension. The Holy Ghost must descend into our hearts and minds, before they can rise to heaven. Cranmer, it should be remarked, inserted the word "ascend;" the petition of the Latin Collect is simply for *dwelling* (mentally) in heavenly places, not for *ascending* thither.

"And with him continually dwell." The "with him continually" is also Cranmer's insertion. And a most significant insertion it is. It seems to have been suggested by one of the Ascension Collects in the Sacramentary of Gelasius, in which the petition is, that, "according to thy

promise, thou mayest ever live with us on earth, and we with thee in heaven." "*With him.*" Seeing that the Son of God took our perfect nature, body, soul, and spirit, without, however, any separate personality, and in that nature has ascended into heaven, we are all ascended *in Him*; and in this sense it is that St. Paul says; "God hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places *IN Christ Jesus.*"¹ But to have risen and ascended *in Christ* is not to have risen and ascended *with Christ*; it does not necessarily import any moral change. We pray, then, that, by the constant upward tendency of the thoughts and affections, we may ascend and dwell with Him, according to that word of the Apostle's; "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."²

"*Continually dwell.*" A strong expression, when used (as it is here), of the Christian's present condition. Yet it is strictly Scriptural. "Our conversation, says St. Paul, "is in heaven"³—which is as nearly as possible equivalent to saying, "Our home is there—the home of our hopes, of our desires, of our affections—nay, of our intercourse,"—inasmuch as we have by the Spirit communion with God and Christ, and with the holy angels, and with the spirits of just men made perfect.⁴ And as, in virtue of our union with Christ by the Holy Ghost, we are said to *dwell with Him* continually in His heavenly home, so reciprocally is He said to *dwell in our hearts* by faith,⁵ and He and His Father are said to make their abode with them who love Him and keep His words.⁶ And the

¹ Eph. ii. 6. ✓

² Col. iii. 1, 2. ✓

³ Philip. iii. 20.

⁴ Heb. xii. 22, 23, 24.

⁵ See Eph. iii. 17.

⁶ See St. John xiv. 23.

end of this continual dwelling with Him "*in heart and mind*," will be the powerful irresistible attraction to Him of *our bodies* at the second Advent, when "this corruptible" shall "put on incorruption, and this mortal immortality,"¹ and they that sleep in Him shall rise first, and they "which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."²

¹ See 1 Cor. xv. 53, 54.

² 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.

CHAPTER XL.

THE SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION DAY.

¶ God the King of glory, who hast exalted thine only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph unto thy kingdom in heaven; We beseech thee, leave us not comfortless; but send to us thine Holy Ghost to comfort us, and exalt us unto the same place whither our Saviour Christ is gone before, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

O rex gloriæ, Domine virtutum, qui triumphator hodie super omnes coelos ascendisti, ne derelinquas nos orphanos, sed mitte promissum Patris in nos Spiritum veritatis.—[Antiphon¹ for Vespers on Ascension Day in the Sarum Breviary.]

THE Collect for the Sunday after Ascension Day in the old Latin Offices made no allusion whatever to the great event which had been commemorated on the previous Thursday.² It was probably for this reason that our

¹ The original meaning of the word *Antiphona* is an alternate chant, executed by two choirs, each of which sings across (or responds to the other). "But in the Roman and unreformed Western Offices the word is ordinarily applied to a short sentence sung before and after one of the Psalms of the day: so called, according to Cardinal Bona, because it gives the tone to the Psalms which are sung antiphonally, or by each side of the choir alternately; and then at the end both choirs join in the antiphon." Our word *Anthem* is a corruption of Antiphon.—[See *Hook's Church Dictionary*, s. v. Anthem.]

² It is surprising how vague and general is the Collect of the Sarum Missal [Col. 415. Burntisland: 1861]:—

Omnipotens sempiterne Deus, fac	Almighty and everlasting God,
nos tibi semper et devotam gerere	make us always to have a will de-

Reformers in 1549 drew up a new Collect, remodelling for that purpose, and expanding at the close, a beautiful prayer which appeared as an antiphon for the Ascension Day, and which ran thus:—"O Lord of hosts, the King of glory, who to-day didst ascend in triumph far above all heavens, do not leave us orphans, but send upon us the promise of the Father, even the Spirit of truth." This antiphon had great associations for the English Church; for it is mentioned as one of those which, when he was yielding gradually to his last sickness, Venerable Bede used to sing in his cell at Jarrow. "And when he came to that word," says the narrator, "'Do not leave us,' he burst into tears and wept much." It was well and wisely done by our Reformers, to preserve such an antiphon in the shape of a collect. But we cannot add that they have been equally happy in the variations they have made upon their original. The antiphon, it will be seen, was addressed to the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, not (as the Collect is) to the First. Collects addressed to our Lord are indeed very rare (the reason of which has been noticed by us on other occasions¹), but our Reformers themselves had already furnished one exception in the Collect for the first Sunday in Lent; and surely here was a case abundantly justifying another. For, first, we are told by St. Luke that, after witnessing the Ascension, the Apostles "worshipped" our Lord (that is, directly recognised His Deity), "and returned to Jerusalem with great joy;"² and by St. Paul, that "God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that

voluntatem, et majestati tuæ sincero corde servire. Per Dominum.

voted unto thee, and to serve thy Majesty with sincerity of heart. Through the Lord.

¹ See *supra* pp. 129, 130, 131, 149, 150.

² St. Luke xxiv. 52.

at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."¹ And, secondly, if a Christian significance is to be sought in the Psalms, the title "King of glory," by which God the Father is addressed in the Collect, is there applied to Christ. The words occur in the twenty-fourth Psalm, which is the Psalm of the Ascension, as the twenty-second is the Psalm of the Crucifixion, and the twenty-third the Psalm of the Paradise-state, into which our Lord passed at death. It was composed originally for the bringing up of the ark from the house of Obed-Edom into the fortress of Zion² (called the city of David), in performing which ceremony the Levites sang, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors" (an allusion to the grim grey antiquity of the old Canaanite fortress), "and the King of glory shall come in."³ The title "King of glory" refers to the Shechinah, or bright light by which God in the tabernacle made Himself visible between the cherubim (called for that reason in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "cherubims of glory"⁴). The ark was typical of Christ in many respects. The law contained within it denoted the law of love, which was written on the heart of the only sinless Man; its annual sprinkling with blood⁵ signified the presentation of His sacrifice to the Father, which He should continually make in the screened sanctuary of heaven; the mercy-seat indicated the result of His propitiation in obtaining mercy for sinners; while the cherubims bending over the mercy-seat in the attitude of adoration symbolized the angels watching, with intense interest,

¹ Philip. ii. 9, 10.

² See 2 Sam. vi. 12-18, and 1 Chron. xv. 25-29.

³ Ps. xxiv. 7, 9.

⁴ Heb. ix. 5.

⁵ See Lev. xvi. 14, 15.

the career of Christ, and desiring "to look into"¹ the things of human redemption. And, independently of the symbolical character of the ark, it is evident that if the words, "the King of glory shall come in," are to be understood of Christ's Ascension, the "King of glory" must be taken to be, not the Father, into whose many-mansioned house the Son was passing, but the Son Himself on His passage thither. It is therefore, I venture to think, a real source of regret that in turning this beautiful anthem to account as a collect (which was a truly happy and well-conceived idea) Cranmer and his coadjutors did not retain the direct address to our Lord, as the continuation of the homage which His Apostles offered to Him on the mount of the Ascension, and that they have diverted from Him to the Father the Scriptural title of "King of glory," which the twenty-fourth Psalm, understood in its Christian sense, clearly ascribes to Him.

Both Epistle and Gospel harmonize remarkably with the Collect. In the Gospel our Lord promises, and leads the Apostles to expect, the gift of the Comforter, whom He would send unto them from the Father,² and for whose coming the Collect is a petition. In the Epistle we are exhorted, inasmuch as the end of all things (that is, the second coming of Christ) is at hand, to be sober and watch unto prayer,³ to exercise charity,⁴ hospitality,⁵ and employ ourselves in mutual edification,⁶ just as that little knot of disciples, in anticipation of our Lord's coming to them by the Spirit, "went up into an upper room,"⁷ and "continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren."⁸ The words "with one accord" show the "fer-

¹ See 1 Pet. i. 12.² St. John xv. 26.³ 1 Pet. iv. 7.⁴ 1 Pet. iv. 8.⁵ Ver. 9.⁶ Vv. 10, 11.⁷ Acts i. 13.⁸ Ver. 14.

vent charity" which they had among themselves; and it is interesting, in connexion with what the Epistle says about "ministering," to observe St. Peter standing up in the midst of the disciples and announcing to them, on the authority of foregone Scripture, what God would have them do in the matter of a successor to Judas. Truly did he comply with that injunction, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God."¹

"O God the King of glory, who hast exalted thine only Son Jesus Christ *with great triumph* unto thy kingdom in heaven." The idea of a triumph finds its Scriptural sanction in the Epistle to the Colossians; "Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it"² (*i.e.* in the cross). "Spoiled" is certainly a very tempting translation, inasmuch as the Apostle is doubtless speaking of the victory of Christ under the image of a Roman triumph, and the spoils of captive foes were carried before a victorious general. But the sense really is, "Having stripped away from Himself that opposition of spiritual foes, which beset Him round about in the days of His flesh, like the poisoned shirt of Nessus which clave to the skin,—having rid Himself of these foes once for all, He made a show of them boldly, triumphing over them in that cross, which was the penalty of sin, and fulfilled all the requirements of justice."³ The captives, in a triumph, were made to pass in long procession before the conqueror, he following in a car drawn by four horses, bearing the palm branch of victory in his right hand, and a sceptre, the emblem of royalty, in the left. The captives were, in this case, the powers of evil, the devil and

¹ 1 Pet. iv. 11.

² Col. ii. 15.

³ See Prof. Lightfoot *in loc.*

his angels, who had received from the cross their final and deadly overthrow. And the escort of Christ, who accompanied His cloud-chariot to the everlasting doors, and greeted Him on His arrival, were the choirs of angels, who sang as He travelled upwards, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in."¹ The army of the victorious general always followed him in a triumph; and these "thousands of angels"² are "the armies which are in heaven," and which follow the Word of God "upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean."³

"We beseech thee, leave us not *comfortless*." The word in the original is "orphans," which our translators would have done better to preserve. For it establishes a correspondence with one of the great titles, which the Prophet Isaiah gives to Christ, "the everlasting Father,"⁴ as also with His own designation of His disciples as "little children,"—"Little children, yet a little while I am with you."⁵ He was their Father, not only in respect of the office which He had fulfilled towards them of spiritual rearing and training, but also because He manifested through the medium of His Humanity the perfections of the Father, so that He could say to them, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?"⁶ And it is noticeable that the ultimate point of sight, to which He always directs their eyes, as that to which all the long perspective of the mediatorial kingdom converged, is the Father, the one fountain of Godhead. "At that day ye shall ask in my name; and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you; for the Father himself loveth you."⁷ And, again, "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father."⁸

¹ Ps. xxiv. 7.² See Ps. lxxviii. 17.³ Rev. xix. 14.⁴ Isa. ix. 6.⁵ St. John xiii. 33.⁶ *Ib.* xiv. 9.⁷ *Ib.* xvi. 26, 27.⁸ *Ib.* xx. 17.

“But send to us thine Holy Ghost to comfort us.” The Greek word translated “Comforter” means, according to its etymology, merely an advocate. And this is the rendering actually adopted in our version in a passage of St. John’s first Epistle:—“If any man sin, we have an *advocate* with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.”¹ But it is to be considered that there are *two* Hebrew words of the Old Testament, for which the Greek has only one equivalent, and that one of these signifies a consoler in trouble, and is rendered in Job “comforter” (“miserable comforters are ye all”), while the other means, “mediator, intercessor, advocate.” And anyhow, we must not narrow or pare away the meaning of Scriptural terms, but rather maintain their richness and fulness of significance. “Comforter,” therefore, is the rendering to which we give the decided preference, being the more comprehensive term of the two; for every one who pleads our cause is, in that respect, a comforter, though not every comforter is an advocate; and, to speak summarily on this matter, we may say that the Holy Ghost, as regards God and our relation to God, is an advocate, but as regards ourselves, a comforter.

“And exalt us unto the same place whither our Saviour Christ is gone before.” Queen Elizabeth’s Latin translation shows that this is not a distinct petition, but dependent, like “to comfort us,” on “Send to us thine Holy Ghost.” The office of the Holy Ghost, as regards ourselves, is not simply to comfort, but to exalt. His comfort is an “holy comfort,” as you have it expressed in the Collect for Whitsun Day; it does not leave us in the low grovelling state in which it found us, but refines, elevates, quickens us. Some consolations are mere seda-

¹ 1 John ii. 1.

tives ; but this is a stimulant as well as a sedative, and will not allow us to settle down on the lees of a carnal indifference. It makes us aspire in heart and mind to those things above, "where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God ;" ¹ it makes it impossible for us to acquiesce contentedly in any lower standard of spirituality than that which is proposed to us in the Gospel ; it leads us to a heavenly conversation at present, and to the anticipation of a physical change hereafter, which shall capacitate us for the inheritance of the kingdom of glory, according to that word of the Apostle's ; "Our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." ²

¹ Col. iii. 1.

² Philip. iii. 20, 21.

CHAPTER XLI.

WHITSUN DAY.

God, who as at this time didst teach the hearts of thy faithful people, by the sending to them the light of thy Holy Spirit; Grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort; through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the same Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

Deus, qui hodierna die corda fidelium Sancti Spiritus illustratione docuisti; da nobis in eodem Spiritu recta sapere, et de ejus semper consolatione gaudere. Per. In unitate ejusdem.¹—*Greg. Sac.—Miss. Sar.*

THE two or three slight additional touches, which Cranmer and his colleagues have given to this ancient Collect in preparing it for the use of the Reformed Church, are certainly very happy. It may be called generally a prayer for light and love; and the intimate relations in which light and love stand to one another are not obscurely indicated in it. The first point to which attention needs to be called, as it might otherwise escape notice, is the correspondence of the body of the prayer with the invocation. The petition is twofold—for a right judgment and for comfort. The invocation speaks of the teaching

¹ In Gregory's Sacramentary, as edited by Muratori (tom. ii. col. 90), the end is given at full length; "Per Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum Filium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitate ejusdem Spiritus Sancti, per omnia sæcula sæculorum."

and illumination, which attended upon the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost; this corresponds with the "right judgment" for which we sue at the present day. But there is a glance at "the comfort" no less than at the "right judgment" in the earlier part of the prayer. For it is said that God taught "*the hearts*,"—not merely the *minds*,—of His faithful ones, by the illumination of His Holy Spirit. . And it is the heart which is the organ of comfort as well as of love, which opens in trouble to receive the balm of consolation shed upon it by the assurance of God's love, and of the love of our brethren.

First, we recite the fundamental fact upon which the petition is based,—the outpouring of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost. "God, who as at this time didst teach the hearts of thy faithful people, by the sending to them the light of thy Holy Spirit." Observe once again, that it is the heart which the Holy Ghost teaches, not the mind; or rather, He teaches the mind through the heart. You will see this in the case of uneducated people, where the mind has received no natural cultivation, and perhaps is very limited in its range of ideas. Let but the heart be touched with Divine truth,—affected, for example, with the sense of sin or of the love of Christ; and it is astonishing with what readiness the mind opens itself to the access of religious ideas, and even what a general sharpening all the intellectual faculties undergo. The philosophy of this is that, in the natural state of man, his mind is clouded as to moral and spiritual truth by the prepossessions of his heart, which therefore must be removed and dissipated before he can discern the truth clearly. "The god of this world," says St. Paul, "hath blinded the *minds* of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of

Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.”¹ And how does God proceed in removing this blindness of mind? “God who” (in the natural creation) “commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath” (in the spiritual creation) “shined in our *hearts*, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”²

“Grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things,”—us of the present day, after the lapse of so many centuries, profiting by all the experiences through which the Church has passed since the day of Pentecost. It would be a great mistake (though it is one into which many fall) to conceive of the light shed abroad at Pentecost as if it were a grand blaze vouchsafed once for all to the primitive disciples, but not capable of increase or of extension to those who should succeed to their faith. The subsequent narrative of the Acts of the Apostles ought to correct this error. St. Peter and the Church generally had very much to learn after the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, much which they could only learn by the progress of events, and the teaching of God’s providence, in short, by the divinely moulded and manipulated experience of the Church. It was but slowly that the revelation burst upon the Jewish nucleus of the Church, that it was God’s mind and will “that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.”³ Peter was recalcitrant against this truth as long as he could be,⁴ and indeed somewhat longer, for even after his own reception⁵ and acknowledgment⁶ of the truth, unworthy Jewish prejudices seem to have clung to his mind with the tenacity of a burr to the traveller’s dress.⁷ True, our Blessed Lord had expressly commissioned His

¹ 2 Cor. iv. 4.² *Ib.* iv. 6.³ Eph. iii. 6.⁴ Acts x. 14.⁵ *Ib.* x. 28, 34, 35.⁶ *Ib.* xv. 8, 9.⁷ Gal. ii. 11, 12.

Apostles to "make disciples of all the nations;"¹ but Divine words are like seeds, they require to lie long in the soil of the mind before they disentangle the germ, sprout, shoot, blossom, bear fruit. Even the Holy Spirit, when we are in full possession of His influences, only develops gradually to our apprehensions the words of God, and uses our experience in developing them. Pascal's celebrated *dictum* that Theology is a stationary science,² set up in stereotype in the primitive age, and therefore incapable of receiving any accession as time goes on, requires a good deal of guarding to prevent it from insinuating what is erroneous. Holy Scripture, no doubt, and the Creeds of the Universal Church, are both immutably fixed, so that nothing can be added to or taken away from them. But the Church's understanding of Holy Scripture and the Creeds ought to grow larger and fuller with her experience; nor should we be at all staggered at finding occasion to modify, or even to retract, some views of Divine truth which we have hitherto held tenaciously. The foundations of the faith are not in the least affected by man's misunderstanding of them. Pentecost light is, in the experience both of the individual and the Church, a waxing light, "which shineth more and more unto the perfect day."³

"Grant us to have a right judgment *in all things*." These last words, "in all things," were inserted by our Reformers, and most significant they are. Not in grave and sacred matters only, not merely in our religious concerns, not alone in the interpretation of Holy Scripture, but even in our little secular affairs, whenever they cause us real perplexity, and we feel that a false step may be attended with very prejudicial results, and more especially

¹ St. Matt. xxviii. 19 (*marg.*)

² See "Pensées de Pascal," Part I. Art. I. *De l'autorité en matière de philosophie.*

³ See Prov. iv. 18.

in questions of a casuistical character, where the path of duty is not obvious, and two contrary principles, equally Scriptural, seem to lead in different directions,—even here we may seek to be guided to “a right judgment” by the Spirit, who taught the hearts of the faithful at Pentecost, if only we will submit to Him for His guidance an unbiassed heart, the needle of which swings perfectly loose on the face of the compass, and has no attraction to any particular quarter. It is a mockery to ask light or counsel of the Spirit, where we have made up our mind to pursue a certain course, or to abide by a particular opinion.

“And evermore rejoice in his holy comfort.” The “evermore” and the “holy” are additional touches from Cranmer’s pen, both of them expressive touches, for which we have to thank him. The “evermore,” which might seem an exaggeration, or at least a needless verbosity, reminds us most usefully of the Apostle’s precepts, which equally extend to every hour of our lives, “Rejoice in the Lord alway ; and again I say, Rejoice.”¹ And in another Epistle, “Rejoice evermore,”²—in all circumstances, however naturally depressing, even as Silas and I did in the prison at Philippi, when our feet were made fast in the stocks.³ Nehemiah and Ezra would not allow the people to be sorry, because the joy of the Lord was their strength.⁴ Joy “in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement,”⁵ is the very sinew of our strength as Christians, and it is for this reason that the Apostle exhorts us to maintain it “evermore.”—The word “holy,” as descriptive of the Spirit’s comfort, opens an equally precious vein of thought. The comfort of the Spirit, unlike the comforts of the world

¹ Philip. iv. 4.² 1 Thess. v. 16.³ See Acts xvi. 23, 24, 25.⁴ See Neh. viii. 9, 10.⁵ Rom. v. 11.

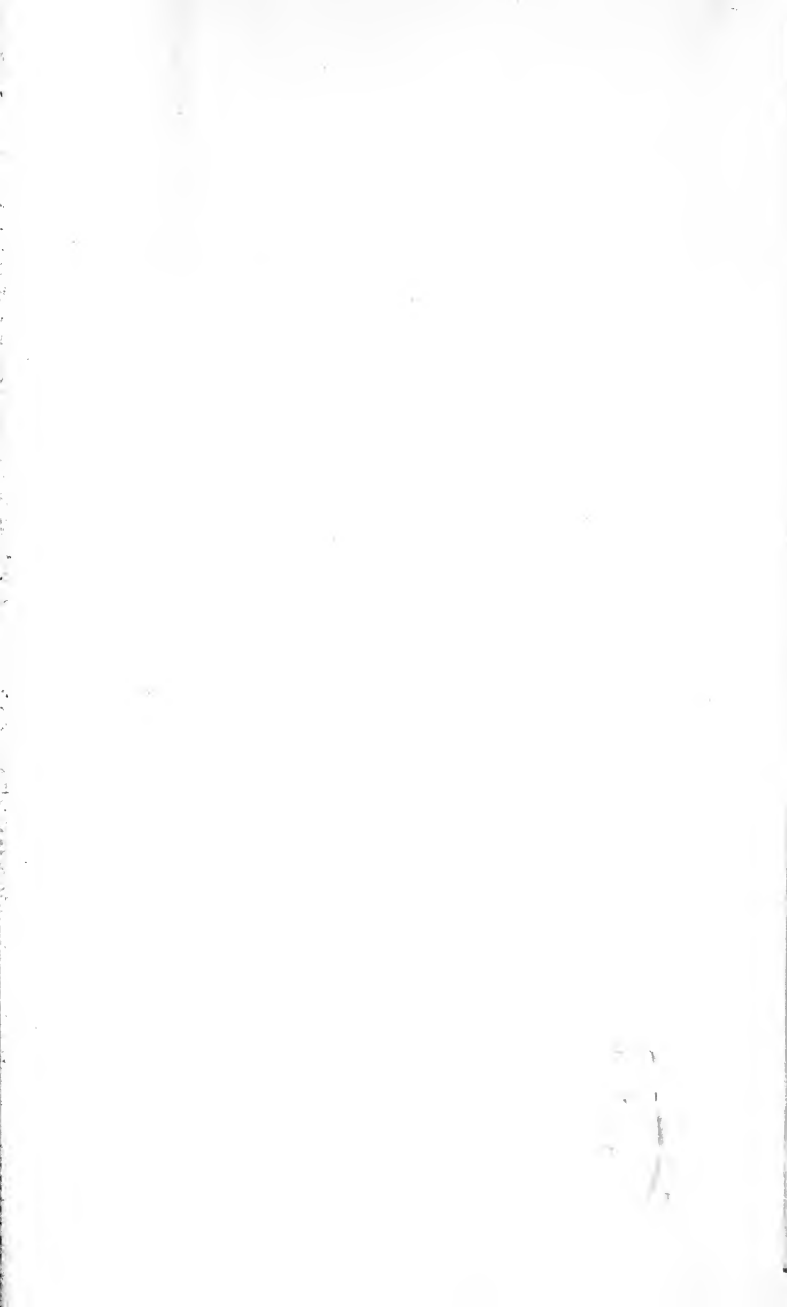
and the flesh, is tempered, chastened, restrained by godly fear. It is not a licentious or self-indulgent comfort; he, whose soul is refreshed by it, holds before his eyes the more sombre as well as the brighter perfections of the Divine character—knows, and is influenced by the knowledge, that “God is a consuming fire”¹ and “a jealous God,”² as well as that He is light and love. To use the phrase employed in the Acts, descriptive of the early Churches after the collapse of Saul’s persecution, he walks “in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost.”³

The appropriateness of the words, “in the unity of the Holy Ghost,”⁴ which here make their appearance for the first and last time in the Collects, deserves a word of comment. Whitsun Day is the great festival of the Holy Ghost. It is meet and right, therefore, that the Church should give us on this day such a glimpse, as we are capable of receiving, into the mysterious relation of the Holy Spirit to the two other Persons of the Blessed Trinity. And the glimpse given us is this, that the Holy Spirit is the unifying principle in the Godhead,—what the keystone is to the arch, what the orb of the sun is to its light and its heat. Thus, too, are we gradually led on towards the great doctrine which will next Sunday be proposed for our meditation, the doctrine that the Three Divine Persons are held together in Unity,—that although three Persons, they are “not three Gods, but one God.”⁵

¹ Heb. xii. 29.² Exod. xx. 5.³ Acts ix. 31.⁴ See the Appendix “On the Terminations of the Collects and Orisons,” Vol. I. pp. 106, 107.⁵ Creed of St. Athanasius.







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